AGGRAVATION OF SINNE: AND SINNING

Against { KNOWLEDGE. MERCIE.

Delivered in ſeverall Sermons upon divers occaſions.

BY

THO: GOODVVIN B. D.

LONDON,
Printed by *M. Fleſher*, for *R. Dawlman* and *I. Rothwell*, and are to be ſold at the ſigne of the Brazen Serpent, and Sun in *Pauls* Churchyard.
MDCXXXVII.

AGGRAVATION OF SINNE.

BY

THO: GOODWIN B.D.

LONDON,
Printed by *M. F.* for *John Rothwell*, and are to be sold at the Sun in *Pauls* Church-yard.

M DC XXX VII.

UMI

A TABLE OF THE CONTENTS OF the Aggravation of sin.

The subject is the sinfulnesse of sin. page 2.
The mischievous effects of the evill of sin. ibid.
1. It hath debased the soule. ibid.
2. It defiles the soule { 1. In an instant. 2. Totally. 3. Eternally. } 3
3. It robs the soule of the image of God. 4
4. It robs a man of God himselfe. 5
5. It was the first founder of hell. 6
The essence of sin is the cause of all these evills. ibid.
Sin an evill that contains all the evils in the world. 7
1. It is the cause of sorrowes, and diseases, and all evills. ibid.
2. There is some peculiar mischief in sin, not found in other evils, as appears in divers instances. 8
Quest. What transcendencie of evill is in the essence

of ſin, that makes it above all other evill. 10
Anſw. *It is contrary to God and all that is his.*
1. *It is contrary to his eſſence, to his exiſtence, and being.* ibid.
2. *It is contrary to all his attributes which are his name, as to himſelfe, and what ever is his.* ibid.
1. *To his lawes and ordinances.*
2. *To his favourites.* 11
3. *To his image in mans owne breaſt.*
Sinfulneſs of ſin aggravated from the perſon ſuffering, being God and man. 12
The leaſt ſin virtually more or leſſe containes all ſin in the nature of it, proved. ibid.
Every ſin inclines our nature more to ſin. 13
Sin containes not onely all other evils in it, but alſo all of its owne kind. ibid.
Sinne a perfect evill. ibid.
Reaſons why ſin is the chiefeſt evill.
1. *Becauſe it is ſimply to be avoided for its ſelfe.*
2. *Becauſe there can be no worſe puniſhment than it ſelfe* 14
3. *Becauſe it cannot have a worſe epithete given it than it ſelfe.*
Uſe. *Wonder at the abounding nature of ſin.* 15
Examine our owne eſtates. ibid.
Queſt. *When a mans ſins may be ſaid to be his own?*
Anſw. 1. *Then he commits ſin out of his owne.*
2. *Then he hates it not, but loves it.*
3. *Then he nouriſheth it, & cheriſheth it.* 17
4. *Then he provides for it.*
5. *Then he lives in ſin.*

Uſe

Uſe 2. *Conſider, the puniſhment of ſin is out of meaſure fearfull.* 18
It containes all miſeries in it. 19
What the damned ſpeake of ſinne in hell. ibid.

Uſe 3. *Onely Ieſus Chriſt can conquer ſin.* 21
Chriſts righteouſneſſe abounds ſins ſinfulneſſe. 22
Come to God through Chriſt, and take him to be our Lord and King. 23
Sinne and Chriſt cannot ſtand together. ibid.
We will not take Chriſt while ſin appears ſinfull to us. ibid.

AGGRA-

IMPRIMATUR;

THO: WEEKES.

R.P. Epᵒ: Lond.

Cap. Domest.

AGGRAVATION OF SINNE.

ROM. 7. 13.

Was that then which is good made death unto mee? God forbid. But ſinne, that it might appeare ſin, working death in mee by that which is good: that ſinne by the commandement might become exceeding ſinfull.

WEE finde our Apoſtle in the 9. verſe to have been alive, but ſtruck upon the ſudden *dead*, by an apparition preſented to him in the glaſſe of the law, *of the ſinfulneſſe of ſinne. Sinrevived*, ſayes the 9. verſe, *appeared to be ſinne*, ſayes the 13. verſe, lookes but like it ſelfe, *above meaſure ſinfull*: and hee falls downe dead at the very ſight of it: *I dyed*, ſayes he in the 9. *it wrought*

death in me, ſayes the 13. that is, an apprehenſion of death and hell, as due to that eſtate I was then in. But yet as the life of ſinne was the death of *Paul*, ſo this death of his was but a preparation to a new life, *I through the Law am dead to the Law, that I might live to God*, *Gal.* 2. 19. and here hee likewiſe ſpeakes of Gods worke upon him at his firſt *converſion*, for then it was that hee relates how ſinne became in his eſteeme, ſo *above meaſure ſinfull*.

The ſubject then to be inſiſted on is the ſinfulneſſe of ſinne, a ſubject therefore as neceſſary as any other, becauſe if ever we be ſaved, ſinne muſt firſt appeare to us all, as it did here to him, *above meaſure ſinfull*.

And firſt, becauſe all knowledge begins at the effects which are obvious to ſenſe, and interpreters of the nature of things, therefore wee will begin this *Demonſtration* of the evill of ſin, from the miſchievous effects it hath filled the world withall, it having done nothing but wrought miſchiefe ſince it came into the world, and all the miſchiefe that hath beene done, it alone hath done, but eſpecially towards the poore ſoule of man, the miſerable ſubject of it.

Which firſt it hath debaſed the ſoule of man, the nobleſt creature under heaven, and higheſt allyed, made to be a companion fit for God himſelfe, but ſinne hath ſtript it of its firſt native *excellency*, as it did *Reuben*, *Gen.* 49. 41. debaſed the ſoule more worth than all the world, as Chriſt himſelfe ſaith, that onely went to the

price

price of it: yet ſinne hath made it a drudge and ſlave to every creature it was made to rule: therefore the *Prodigall* as a type is ſaid to *ſerve ſwine*, and *feed on huskes*, ſo as every vanity maſters it. Therefore we find in Scripture, that men are ſaid to be *ſervants to wine*, *Tit.* 2. 3. ſervants to riches, and divers luſts, &c.

And hence it is that *ſhame* attends upon it, *Rom.* 6. 21. Now ſhame ariſeth out of an apprehenſion of ſome excellencie debaſed: and by how much the excellencie is greater, by ſo much is the ſhame the greater, and therefore unutterable confuſion will one day befall ſinners: becauſe ſinne is the debaſement of an unvaluable excellencie.

Secondly, it not onely debaſeth it, but defiles it alſo; and indeed there was nothing elſe that could *defile it*, *Mat.* 15. 20. for the ſoule is a moſt pure beame, bearing the image of the *Father of lights*: as farre ſurpaſſing the ſunne in pureneſſe, as the ſunne doth a clod of earth; and yet all the dirt in the world cannot defile the ſunne; all the clouds that ſeeke to muffle it, it ſcatters them all: but ſinne hath defiled the ſoule, yea, *one* ſinne, the leaſt defiles it, in an *inſtant*, *totally*, *eternally*.

Firſt, one ſinne did it in the fall of *Adam*, *Rom.* 5. 17. *one offence* polluted him, and all the world. Now ſuppoſe you ſhould ſee one drop of darkneſſe ſeazing on the ſunne, and putting out that light and eye of heaven, and to looſen it out of the orbe it moves in, and cauſe it to drop downe a lump of darkneſſe, you would ſay it were a

ſtrange darkneſſe: this ſinne did then in the ſoule, to which yet the ſunne is but as a Taper.

Secondly, it defiles it thus *in an inſtant*. Take the moſt glorious Angell in heaven, and let one of the leaſt ſinnes ſeaze upon his heart, he would in an inſtant fall downe from heaven, ſtript of all his glory, the ugliеſt creature that ever was beheld: you would count that the ſtrongeſt of all poyſons, that would poyſon in an inſtant; as *Nero* boiled a poiſon to that height, that it killed *Germanicus* as ſoone as he received it; now ſuch an one is ſinne.

Thirdly, ſinne defiles it *totally*: it reſts not in one member onely, but beginning at the underſtanding, eates into the will and affections, ſoaks through all. Thoſe diſeaſes we account ſtrongeſt, which ſeaze not on a joynt or a member onely, but ſtrikes rottenneſſe through the whole body.

Fourthly, it defiles *eternally*, it being *aterna macula*, a ſtaine which *no nitre or ſope*, or any creature can *waſh out*, *Ier.* 2.22. There was once let in a deluge of water, and the world was all overflow'd with it; it waſhed away ſinners indeed, but not one ſinne. And the world ſhall be a fire again at the latter day, and all that fire, and thoſe flames in hell that follow, ſhall not purge out one ſinne.

Thirdly, it hath robbed the ſoule of the *image of God*, deprived *us of the glory of God*, *Rom.* 3.23. the image of Gods holineſſe, which is his beauty and ours: wee were beautifull and all glorious once within, which though but an accident, is more

more worth than all mens ſoules devoid of it, it being a likeneſſe unto God, *a divine nature*, without which no man ſhall ſee God. Though man in Innocency had all perfections united in him *via eminentiæ*, that are to be found in other creatures, yet this was more worth than all: for all the reſt made him not like to God, as this did; without which all Paradiſe could not make *Adam* happy; which when he had loſt, he was left *naked*, though thoſe his other perfections remained with him, which is *profitable for all things*, as the Apoſtle ſayes. The leaſt dramme of which, the whole world emballanced with, would be found too light; without which the glorious Angels would be damned devills, the Saints in heaven damned ghoſts, this it hath robbed man of.

Fourthly, it hath robbed man even of God himſelfe: *Your ſinnes ſeparate* (ſayes God) *betwixt you and me*: and therefore they are ſaid to *live without God in the world*: and in robbing a man of God, it robs him of all things; for *all things are ours*, but ſo farre as *God is ours*; of God whoſe face makes heaven, he is all in all, *his loving kindneſſe is better than life*, and containeth beauty, honours, riches, all: yea they are but a drop to him.

But its miſchiefe hath not ſtaid here, but as the *Leproſie of the Lepers* in the old Law, ſometimes infected their houſes, garments; ſo it hath hurld confuſion over all the world, brought *a vanitie* on the *creature*, *Rom.* 8. 23. and *a curſe*; and had Gen. 3.

not Chriſt undertooke the ſhattered condition of
Heb. 1. 3. the world to uphold it, it had fallen about *Adams* eares.

And though the old walls and ruinous palace of the world ſtands to this day, yet the beauty, the gloſſe, and glory of the hangings is ſoyled and marred with many imperfections caſt upon every creature.

But as the houſe of the Leper was to be pulled downe, and Traitors houſes uſe to be made jakes: ſo the world (if Chriſt had not ſtept in) had ſhrunke into its firſt nothing: and you will ſay, that is a ſtrong carrion that retaines not onely infection in it ſelfe, but infects all the aire about: ſo this, that not the ſoule the ſubject of it onely, but all the world.

Laſtly, it was the firſt founder of hell, and laid the firſt corner ſtone thereof: ſinne alone brought in and filled that bottomleſſe gulfe with all the fire, and brimſtone, and treaſures of wrath, which ſhall never be burnt and conſumed. And this crucified and pierced Chriſt himſelfe, poured on him his Fathers wrath, the enduring of which for ſinne, was ſuch, as that all the Angels in heaven had crackt and ſanke under it.

But yet this eſtimate is but taken from the effects of it, the eſſence of it which is the cauſe of all theſe evills, muſt needs have much more miſchiefe in it. Shall I ſpeak the leaſt evill I can ſay of it? *It conteins all evills elſe in it:* therefore *Iames* 1. 23. the Apoſtle calls it *filthineſſe, and abundance of ſuperfluitie*, or excrement as it were,

of

of naughtineſſe. ὑπερβολὴ κακίας. As if ſo tranſcendent, that if all evills were to have an excrement, a ſcumme, a ſuperfluitie, ſinne is it, as being the abſtracted quinteſſence of all evill. An evill, which in the nature and eſſence of it *virtually*, and *eminently*, containes all evills of what kinde ſoever that are in the world; Inſomuch as in the Scriptures you ſhall finde that all the evills in the world, ſerve but to anſwer for it, and to give names to it. Hence ſinne it is called *poyſon*, and ſinners *ſerpents*: ſinne is called *a vomit*, ſinners *dogs*: ſinne the ſtench of graves, and they *rotten ſepulchres*: ſinne *mire*, ſinners *ſowes*: and ſinne *darkneſſe, blindneſſe, ſhame, nakedneſſe, folly, madneſſe, death*, whatſoever is filthy, defective, infective, painfull. Now as the holy Ghoſt ſayes of *Nabal, as is his name, ſo is he*; ſo may wee ſay of ſinne: for if *Adam* gave names to all things, according to their nature, much more God, *who calls things as they are*. Surely God would not ſlander ſinne, though it be his onely enemie. And beſides, there is reaſon for this, for it is the cauſe of all evills. God ſowed nothing but good ſeed in the world; *He beheld, and ſaw all things were very good*. It is ſinne hath ſowne the tares: all thoſe evills that have come up, ſorrowes and diſeaſes, both unto men and beaſts. Now whatſoever is in the effect, is *via eminentiæ* in the cauſe. Surely therefore it is to the ſoule of man (the miſerable veſſell and ſubject of it) all that, which poyſon, death, and ſickneſſe is unto the other creatures, and to the body; and in that, it is all

theſe

these to the *soule*, it is therefore more than all these to it: for *corruptio optimi pessima*: by how much the soule exceeds all other creatures, by so much must sinne, which is the corruption, poyson, death, and sickneſſe of it, exceed all other evills.

But yet this is the least ill that can be said of it. There is 2. some further transcendent peculiar mischiefe in it, that is not to be found in all other evills, as will appeare in many instances.

For first, all other evills God proclaimes himselfe the author of, and ownes them all; though sinne be the meritorious cause of all, yet God the efficient and disposing cause. *There is no evill in the City but I have done it.* He onely disclaimeth this, *Iam.* 1.13. as a bastard of some others breeding, for *he is the Father of lights, ver.* 17.

Secondly, the utmost extremity of the evill of punishment God the Sonne under-went, had a cup mingled him of his Father, more bitter than if all the evils in the world had beene strained in, and he dranke it off heartily to the bottome; but not a drop of sinne, though sweetned with the offer of all the world, would goe downe with him.

Thirdly, other evils the Saints have chosen and imbraced as good, and refused the greatest good things the world had, as evill, when they came in competition with sinne. So *Moses chose rather to suffer, much rather than to enjoy the pleasures of* sinne, *Heb.* 11. from 24. to 28. So *Chrysostome*, when *Eudoxia* the Empresse threatned him,

him: goe tell her, ſayes he, *Nil niſi peccatum timeo*, I feare nothing but ſinne.

Fourthly, take the Devill himſelfe, whom you all conceive to be more full of miſchiefe than all the evills in the world, called therefore in the abſtract *ſpirituall wickedneſſe*, *Eph.* 6. 12. yet it was but ſinne that firſt ſpoiled him, and it is ſinne *poſſeſſeth* the very devils: he was a glorious Angell, till he was acquainted with it: and could there be a ſeparation made betweene him and ſinne, he would be againe of as good, ſweet, and amiable a nature, as any creature in earth or heaven.

Fiftly, Though other things are evill, yet nothing makes the creature *accurſed* but ſinne: as all good things in the world doe not make a man a bleſſed man, ſo nor all the evills accurſed. God ſayes not, bleſſed are the honorable, and the rich, nor that accurſed are the poore: but *curſed is the man that continues not in all things*, *Gal.* 3. 10. a curſe to the leaſt ſinne; and on the contrary, *bleſſed is the man whoſe iniquities are forgiven, &c. Rom.* 4. 7.

Sixtly, God hates nothing but ſinne. Were all evills ſwept downe into one man, God hates him not ſimply for them, not becauſe thou art poore and diſgraced, but onely becauſe ſinfull. It is ſin he hates, *Rev.* 2. 15. *Iſa.* 27. 11. yea it alone: and whereas other attributes are diverſely communicated in their effects to ſeverall things: as his love and goodneſſe, Himſelfe, his Sonne, his children, have all a ſhare in: yet all the hatred (which is as large as his love) is ſolely poured

out upon, and wholly, and limited onely unto sinne.

All the question will be what transcendencie of evill is in the essence of it, that makes it above all other evills, and hated, and it onely by God, Christ, the Saints, &c. more than any other evill.

Why? It is *enmity with God, Rom.* 8. 7. abstracts we know speake essences: the meaning is, it is as directly contrary to God, as any thing could be: for contrary it is to God, and all that is his.

As 1. contrary to his essence, to his existence, and being God: for it makes men hate him, *Rom.* 1. 30. and *as he that hateth his brother is a murtherer,* 1 *Iob.* 3. 15. so hee that hateth God may be said to be a murtherer of him, and wisheth that he were not. *Peccatum est Dei-cidium.*

2. Contrary it is to all his attributes which are his *name*: men are jealous of their names: Gods name is himselfe; as 1. It makes a man slight Gods goodnesse, and to seeke happinesse in the creature, as if hee were able to be happy without him. And 2. it deposeth his soveraignty, and sets up other Gods before his face. 3. It contemns his truth, power, and justice. And 4. turnes his grace into wantonnesse.

And as to himselfe, so to what ever is his, or deare to him. Besides, A King hath 3. things in an especiall manner deare to him: *His Lawes, His favourites, his image stampt upon his coine*: and so hath God.

First,

First, his lawes and ordinances: God never gave Law, but it hath beene broken by sinne; ἀνομία is the definition of it, *The transgression of the Law*, 1 *Ioh.* 3.4. yea it is called destroying the Law, *Psal.* 119. 126. And know, that Gods Law, the least tittle of it, is more deare to him, than all the world. For ere the least tittle of it shall be broken, heaven and earth shall passe. The least sinne therefore, which is a breach of the least law, is worse than the destruction of the world: and for his worship, (as envying God should have any,) it turns his ordinances into sinne.

Secondly, for his favourites: God hath but a few poore ones; upon whom becauſe God hath set his love, sinne hath set its hatred.

Lastly, for his image even in a mans owne breast: the law of the members fights against the law of the mind, and endevoureth to expell it, though a man should be damned for it. *Gal.* 5.17. *The flesh* (namely sinne) *lusteth against the Spirit*, for they are contraries. Contrary indeed; for me thinkes though it hates that image in others, that yet it should spare it in a mans selfe, out of self-love; but yet, though a man should be damned, if this image be expelled, it yet laboureth to doe this; so deadly is that hatred, a man hates himselfe, as holy, so farre as he is sinfull.

It abounds now so high, as our thoughts can follow it no farther: *Divines* say, it aspires unto infinity, the object against whom it is thus contrary unto, being God, who is infinite, they tell

us, that objectively, ſinne it ſelfe is infinite. Sure I am, the worth of the object or party offended, aggravates the offence: an ill word againſt the King is high treaſon, not the greateſt indignity to another man. Sure I alſo am, that God was ſo offended with it, as, though he loves his Sonne as himſelfe, yet he (though *without ſinne*) being but *made ſinne* by imputation, yet God *ſpared him not*: and becauſe the creatures could not ſtrike a ſtroake hard enough, he himſelfe was *pleaſed to bruiſe him*, *Eſay* 53. 16. *He ſpared not his owne Sonne*, *Rom.* 8. 32. His love might have overcome him, to have paſſed by it to his Sonne; at leaſt a word of his mouth might have pacified him: yet ſo great was his hatred of it, and offence at it, as he powred the vialls of his wrath on him: Neither would entreaty ſerve, for *though he cryed with ſtrong cryes it ſhould paſſe from him*, God would not, till he had out-wraſtled it.

And as the perſon offended, aggravates the offence, as before, ſo alſo the perſon ſuffering, being God and man, argues the abounding ſinfulneſſe of it. For, for what crime did you ever hear a King was put to death? their perſons being eſteemed in worth above all crime, as civill. Chriſt was the *King of Kings*.

And yet there is one conſideration more to make the meaſure of its iniquity fully full, and to abound to flowing over, and that is this, that the leaſt ſinne virtually more or leſſe containes all ſinne in the nature of it (I meane not that all are equall, therefore I adde more or leſſe)

and

and I prove it thus: becauſe *Adam* by one offence contracted the ſtaine of all, no ſooner did one ſinne ſeaze upon his heart, but he had all ſinnes in him.

And ſo every ſinne in us by a miraculous multiplication inclines our nature more to every ſinne than it was before: it makes the pollution of nature of a deeper dye; not onely to that ſpecies of ſinne, whereof it is the proper individuall act, but to all elſe: as bring one candle into a roome, the light ſpreads all over; and then another, the light is all over more increaſed: So it is in ſinne; for the leaſt cuts the ſoule off from God, and then it is ready to goe a whoring after every vanity that will entice it, or entertaine it.

And this ſhewes the fulneſſe of the evill of it, in that it containes not onely all other evills in the world in it, but alſo all of its owne kinde. As you would count that a ſtrange poyſon, the leaſt drop of which containes the force of all poyſon in it: That a ſtrange diſeaſe, the leaſt infection whereof brought the body ſubject to all diſeaſes: yet ſuch an one is ſinne, the leaſt making the ſoule more prone and ſubject to all.

And now you ſee it is a perfect evill; and though indeed it cannot be ſaid to be the chiefeſt in that full ſenſe wherein God is ſaid to be the chiefeſt good; becauſe if it were as bad as God is good, how could he pardon it, ſubdue it, bring it to nothing as he doth? and then how could it have addition to it, one ſin being more ſinfull than another? *Ezek.* 8. 15. *John* 19. 11. But yet it

hath ſome analogie of being the chiefeſt evill, as God the chiefeſt good.

For 1. as God is the chiefeſt good, who therefore is to be loved for himſelfe, and other things but for his ſake; ſo alſo is ſin the chiefeſt evill, becauſe it is ſimply to be avoided for its ſelfe; but other evills become good, yea deſirable when compared with it.

Secondly, as God is the chiefeſt good, becauſe he is the greateſt happineſſe to himſelfe; ſo ſin, the greateſt evill to it ſelfe: for there can be no
Rom. 1. worſe puniſhment of it, than its ſelfe; therefore when God would give a man over, as an enemie he meanes never to deale withall more, he gives him up to ſinne.

And thirdly, it is ſo evill, as it cannot have a worſe *Epithete* given it, than it ſelfe; and therefore the Apoſtle, when he would ſpeak his worſt of it, and wind up his expreſſion higheſt, *uſque ad hyperbolem*, calls it by its own name, ſinfull ſinne, *ἁμαρτία ἁμαρτία*, Rom. 7. 13. that as in God being the greateſt good, *quicquid eſt in Deo eſt Deus ipſe*, therefore his attributes and names are but himſelfe, *idem prædicatur de ſeipſo*: ſo it is with ſinne, *quicquid eſt in peccato, peccatum eſt, &c.* he can call it no worſe than by its owne name, *ſinfull ſinne.*

Uſe

USE.

AND what have I beene ſpeaking of all this while? Why? but of one ſinne in the generall nature of it. There is not a man here, but hath millions of them; as many as the ſands upon the Sea ſhore; yea, as there would be Atomes, were all the world pounded to duſt, it exceeds in number alſo; and therefore ere we goe any further, let all our thoughts break off here in wonderment at the abounding of ſinne, above all things elſe; for other things, if they be great, they are but a few; if many, they are but ſmall: the world, tis a big one indeed, but yet there is but one; the ſands, though innumerable, yet they are but ſmall; your ſinfulneſſe exceeds in both.

And next, let all our thoughts be wound up to the moſt deepe and intenſe conſideration of our eſtates; for if one ſin abounds thus, what tongue can expreſſe, or heart can conceive their miſery, who to uſe the Apoſtles phraſe, 1 *Cor.*15. *are yet in their ſinnes?* that is, ſtand bound to God in their owne ſingle bond onely, to anſwer for all their ſinnes themſelves; and cannot, in the eſtate wherein yet they ſtand of impenitencie and unbeleefe, plead the benefit of Chriſts death, to take off and eaſe them of the guilt of one ſinne, but all their ſinnes are yet all their owne, which

to

to a man in Chriſt they are not; for his owne bonds are cancelled, and given in, and Chriſt entred into bonds for him, and all his ſins tranſlated upon him.

Now for a proper character of their eſtate, and ſutable to this expreſſion:

Firſt then a mans ſinnes may be ſaid to be ſtill his owne: when he committeth ſinne, *out of his owne*, that is the full frame and inclination of his heart. Thus the devill is ſaid to ſinne, *Ioh.* 8.44. *ex ſuis ideis out of his owne*; the whole frame of his ſpirit is in it; which a man in Chriſt cannot be ſo fully ſaid to doe, for hee hath a new creature in him *that ſinneth not*, 1 *Ioh.* 3.1,9. that can ſay even when he ſins, *It is not I, but ſinne.*

And ſecondly, then ſinne is a mans owne, when he hates it not, but loves it: *The world loves his owne*, ſaith Chriſt, *Ioh.* 15.29. and ſo doth a wicked man his ſinne, *more than any good*; which is *Davids* character, *Pſal.* 52.3.

And thirdly, what is a mans owne, he nouriſheth and cheriſheth; therefore *Eph.* 5.19. *No man hates his owne fleſh, but loveth it, and cheriſheth it*: ſo doe men their ſinnes, when they are their owne. Thoſe great and rich oppreſſors, *Iam.* 5.5. are ſaid to *nouriſh their hearts in wantonnes*, and in pleaſure, *as in a day of ſlaughter*; as living upon the creame of ſinning, and having ſuch plenty, they pick out none but the ſweeteſt bits to nouriſh their hearts withall.

4. So what a man *provides* for, that is his own; ſo ſayes the Apoſtle, *A man that provides not for his*

his owne, is worse, &c. When therefore men *make provision for the flesh*, as the *phrase* is, *Rom.* 13.14. have their Caterers and contrivers of their lusts, and whose chiefest care is every morning, what pleasures of sinne they have that day to be enjoyed, it is a signe that their sins are their owne.

In a word, when men live in sinne, 'tis the expression used, 1 *Tim.* 5. 6. *She that lives in pleasure, is dead while she lives.* When the revenewes of the comfort of mens lives come in, from the pleasures of sinne, and that supplies them with all those necessaries that belong to life; as when 'tis their element they *drink in like water*; their meat, *they eate the bread of wickednesse*, *Prov.* 1.7. and it goes downe, and troubleth them not; their sleepe also, *they cannot sleepe till they have done* or contrived some *mischiefe*, *ver.* 16. their apparell, as when *violence and oppression covers them as a garment*, and *pride compasseth them as a chaine*, *Psal.* 73. their recreation also, *It is a pastime for a foole to doe wickedly*, he makes sport and brags of it, *Prov.* 10. 23. yea their health, being *sick* and discontented, when their lusts are not satisfied, as *Ahab* was for *Naboths* vineyard; *Amnon grew leane*, when hee could not enjoy his Paramore.

All these, as they live in their sins here, and so are dead whilest they live, and so are miserable, making the greatest evill their chiefest good; so when they come to die (as we all must doe one day) and how soone, and how suddenly we know not; wee carry our soules, our precious soules,

as precious water in a brittle glaſſe, ſoone cracked, and then we are *ſpilt like water, which none can gather up againe*; or but as a candle in a paper lanthorne; in clay walls, full of cranyes, often but a little cold comes in, and blowes the candle out;) and then, without a through change of heart before, wrought from all ſinne, to all godlineſſe, they will *die in their ſinnes*. And all, and the utmoſt of all miſeries is ſpoken in that one word: and therefore *Chriſt*, when he would ſumme up all miſeries in one expreſſion, tells the *Phariſees* they ſhould *die in their ſins*, *Iohn* 8.28.

2 Sam. 14.14.

Uſe 2.

AND let us conſider further, that if ſin be thus above meaſure ſinfull, that *Hell that followeth death*, is then likewiſe above meaſure fearful. And ſo it is intimated to be a puniſhment *without meaſure*, *Ier.* 30. 11. compared with *Iſa.* 27. *Puniſh them as I puniſh thee* (ſayes God to his owne) *but I will puniſh thee in meaſure*. And indeed, ſinne being committed againſt God *the King of Kings*, it can never be puniſhed enough. But as the killing of a King, is amongſt men a crime ſo hainous, that no tortures can exceed the deſert of it: we uſe to ſay, all *tormenta* are too little, any death too good for ſuch a crime. Now *peccatum eſt Dei ſtadium*, as I ſaid before, a deſtroying God as much as in us lies: and therefore none but God himſelfe can give it a full puniſhment: therefore it is called a *falling into Gods hands*, *Heb.* 10. 31. which, as he

ſayes

ſayes there, is *fearfull*. For if his *breath* blowes us *to deſtruction, Iob* 4.9. for we are but *duſt heaps*; Iſ.40. yea, his nod, *he nods to deſtruction, Pſal.* 80.16. then what is the weight of his hands, even of thoſe hands, *which ſpan the heavens, and hold the earth in the hollow of them?* and if God take it into his hands to puniſh, he will be ſure to doe unto the full. *Sinne* is *mans worke*, and *puniſhment* is *Gods*, and *God* will ſhew himſelfe as *perfect* in *his worke*, as *man* in *his*.

If ſinne be *malum catholicum*, as hath been ſaid, that containes all evils in it; then the puniſhment God will inflict ſhall be *malum catholicum* alſo, containing in it all miſeries; it is a *cup full of mixture*, ſo called *Pſal.*75.8. as into which God hath ſtrained the quinteſſence of all miſeries, and *the wicked of the earth muſt drink the dregges of it*, though it be eternity unto the bottome. And if one ſin deſerves a hell, a puniſhment above meaſure, what will millions of millions doe? And we reade that *every ſinne ſhall receive a juſt recompence, Heb.*2.3. oh let us then take heed of dying in our ſinnes, and therefore of living in them; for we ſhall lie in priſon till we have paid the very utmoſt farthing.

And therefore if all this that I have ſaid of it wil not engender anſwerable apprehenſions of it in you, (this being but painting the toad, which you can look upon and handle without affrightment) I wiſh that if without danger you could but lay your eares to hell, that ſtanding as it were behind the skreene, you might heare ſinne ſpoken of in

its owne dialect by the oldeſt ſonnes of perdition there, to heare what *Cain* ſayes of murthering his brother *Abel*; what *Saul* of his perſecuting *David*, and the Prieſts of *Iehovah*; what *Balaam* and *Achitophel* ſay of their curſed counſels and policies; what *Ahab* ſayes of his oppreſſion of *Naboth*; what *Iudas* of treaſon; and heare what expreſſions they have, with what horrors, yellings, groanes, diſtractions, the leaſt ſin is there ſpoken of. If God ſhould take any mans ſoule here, and as he rapt His, into the third heavens, where he ſaw grace in its fulleſt brightneſſe; ſo carry any ones ſoule into thoſe *chambers of death*, as *Sólomon* calls them, and leading him through all, from chamber to chamber, ſhew him the *viſions* of *darkneſſe*, and hee there heare all thoſe bedlames cry out, one of this ſinne, another of that, and ſee ſinne as it lookes in hell! But there is one aggravation more of the evill and miſery ſinne brings upon men, I have not ſpoken of yet, that it blinds their eyes, and hardens their hearts, that they doe not ſee, nor lament their miſery, till they be in hell; and then it is too late.

Vſe 3.

BUt what, doth ſin ſo exceed in ſinfulneſſe, and is the venome of it boyled up to ſuch a height of miſchiefe, that there ſhould be no name in heaven and earth able to grapple with it, and deſtroy it? Is there no antidote, no balme in *Gilead* more ſoveraigne, than it is deadly? Surely yes, God would

would never have ſuffered ſo potent and malicious an enemy to have ſet foot in his dominions, but that he knew how to conquer it, and that not by puniſhing of it onely in hell, but by deſtroying it: onely it is too potent for all the creatures to encounter with. This victory is alone reſerved for *Chriſt*, it can die by no other hand, that he may have the glory of it; which therefore is the top of his glory, as mediator, and his higheſt title, the memory of which he beares written in his name JESUS, *for he ſhall ſave his people from their ſinnes*, *Mat.* 1.21. And therefore the Apoſtle *Paul*, his chiefeſt Herauld, proclaimes this victory with a world of ſolemnity and triumph, 1 *Cor.* 15.36. *Oh death, where is thy ſting? oh grave, where is thy victory? the ſting of death is ſinne, the ſtrength of ſinne is the Law: but thankes be to God that gives us the victory through our Lord Ieſus Chriſt*: which yet again addes to the *Demonſtration of the ſinfulneſſe of it*: for the ſtrength of ſinne was ſuch, that like *Goliah* it would have defied the whole hoſt of heaven and earth. *It was not poſsible the blood of Bulls and goats ſhould take away ſinne*, *Heb.* 10.4. nor would the riches of the world, or the blood of men have beene a ſufficient ranſome: *Will the Lord be pleaſed with rivers of oyle? ſhall I give my firſt borne for my tranſgreſſion?* No, ſayes he, there is no proportion, for thy firſt borne is but the fruit of thy body, and ſinne is the *ſinne of thy ſoule*, *Mich.* 6.7. it muſt coſt more to redeeme a ſoule than ſo, *Pſal.* 49.9. No, couldeſt thou bring rivers of teares, in ſtead

of rivers of oyle; which if any thing, were like to pacifie God, yet are they but the excrements of thy braines; but ſinne is the ſinne of thy heart: yea all the righteouſneſſe that we could ever do, cannot make amends for one ſinne: for ſuppoſe it perfect, when as yet it is but *dung*, *Mal.* 2. 3. and a *menſtruous cloath*, yet thou oweſt it already as thou art a creature; and one debt cannot pay another. If then we ſhould goe a begging to all the Angels, who never ſinned, let them lay all their ſtock together, it would begger them all to pay for one ſinne: no, it is not the merit of Angels will doe it; for ſinne is the tranſgreſſion, the deſtruction of the Law, *Pſal.* 109. 1. and the leaſt ſinne is more worth than heaven, and all that is therein.

Onely, though it be thus unconquerably ſinfull by all created powers, it hath not gone beyond the price that Chriſt hath paid for it; the Apoſtle compares to this very purpoſe, *ſinne* and *Chriſts righteouſneſſe* together, *Rom.* 5. 15, 20. 'Tis true, ſayes hee, that *ſinne abounds*, and that *one ſinne*, πολλὰ παραπτώματα, and inſtanceth in *Adams* ſinne, which ſtaineth all mens natures to the end of the world; yet ſayes he, the *gift of righteouſneſſe by Chriſt abounds much more*; abounds to flowing over, περισσεύσασα, ſayes the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 1. 14. *as the ſea doth above mole-hills*, *Malach.* 7. 14. Though therefore it would undoe all the Angels, yet *Chriſts riches are unſearchable*, *Eph.* 3. 8. hee hath ſuch riches of merit, as are able to pay all thy debts the very firſt day of thy mariage with him,

him, though thou hadſt beene a ſinner millions of yeares, afore the creation to this day: and when that is done, there is enough left to purchaſe thee more grace and glory than all the Angels have in heaven. In a word, he is *able to ſave to the utmoſt, all that come to God by him*, Heb. 7. 5. let their ſins be what they will.

But then wee muſt *come* to him, and *to God by him*, and take him as our Lord, and King, and head, and husband, as he is freely tendered, we muſt be made one with him, and have our hearts divorced from all our ſinnes for ever. And why not now? doe we yet look for another Chriſt? and to alludе to us, as *Naomi* ſaid to *Ruth*, Is there yet any more ſonnes in my wombe, that they may be your husbands? So ſay I, Hath God any more ſuch ſonnes? or is not this Chriſt good enough? or are we afraid of being happy too ſoon, in being married to him?

But yet if we will have Chriſt indeed (without whom we are undone) *how ſhall we then continue in ſinne*, which is thus above meaſure ſinfull? no not in one. The Apoſtle ſpeaks there in the language of impoſſibility and inconſiſtencie. Chriſt, and the raigne of one ſinne, they cannot ſtand together. Rom. 6.

And indeed, wee will not ſo much as take Chriſt, untill firſt wee have ſeene more or leſſe this viſion here, and ſinne appear to us, as to him, above meaſure ſinfull: naturally we ſlight it and make a mock of, and account it preciſeneſſe to ſtick and make conſcience of it: but if once ſinne thus

thus appeares to any but in its owne colours, that man will looke upon the least sinne then, as upon hell it selfe; and like a man affrighted, feare in all his wayes, lest he should meet with sinne, and starts at the very appearance of it; he weepes if sinne doe but see him, and hee doe but see it in himselfe and others; and cryes out as *Ioseph* did, *How shall I doe this, and sinne?* and then a man will make out for Christ, as a condemned man for life, as a man that can no longer live, *oh give me Christ, or else I die*; and then if upon this Christ appeares to him, and *manifests himselfe*, as his promise is to thē that seek him, *Ioh.* 14.21. his heart thereupon will much more detest and loathe it: he saw it evill afore, but then it comes to have a new tincture added, which makes it infinitely more sinfull in his eyes; for he then lookes upon every sinne as guilty of Christs bloud, as dyed with it, though *covered by it*; *the grace of God appearing, teacheth us to deny all ungodlinesse and worldly lusts. The love of Christ constraines him.* Thinkes he, Shall I live in that for which Christ died? shall that be my life, which was his death? did he that never knew sinne, undergoe the torment for it, and shall I be so unkinde as to enjoy the pleasure of it? No, but as *David* when hee was very thirstie, and had water of the well of *Bethleem* brought him, with the hazard of mens lives, powred it on the ground; for sayes hee, *It is the blood of these men*: So sayes he, even when the cup of pleasures is at his very lips, It cost the blood of Christ, and so pours it upon the ground.

And

And as the love of Chriſt conſtraines him, ſo the power of Chriſt doth change him. Kings may pardon Traytors, but they cannot change their hearts; but Chriſt pardons none, hee doth not make new creatures, and all *old things paſſe away*, becauſe he makes them friends, favourites to live with, and delight in; and if men *put on Chriſt, and have learned him, as the truth is in Ieſus, they put off as concerning the former converſation the old man, with the deceitfull luſts*; and he *ceaſeth from ſinne*, that is, from the courſe of any knowne ſin: they are the Apoſtles owne words, which ſhall judge us; and if we ſhould expect ſalvation from him upon any other termes, we are deceived; for *Chriſt is author of ſalvation to them onely that obey* him, *Heb.* 5.9. 1 Pet. 5. 1, 2.

E AGGRA-

AGGRAVATIONS OF SINNING AGAINST KNOWLEDGE.

BY

THO: GOODWIN B. D.

LONDON,
Printed by *M. F.* for *John Rothwell*, and are to be sold at the Sun in *Pauls* Church-yard.

M DC XXXVII.

OBSERVATIONS
OF
SINNING
AGAINST
KNOWLEDGE.

Contents of Aggravation of sinning againſt knowledge.

Doct. TO ſinne againſt knowledge is the higheſt aggravation of ſinning. *page* 34

1. *Demonſtrations of the point, by comparing it with other kinds of ſinning.* 36

How much ſins againſt knowledge doe tranſcend ſins of ignorance. 37

1. *In ſins of ignorance there may be a ſuppoſition, if he had known it, he would not have done it: but not ſo in theſe.* ibid.

2. *The vaſt difference between them appears in the repentance God accepts for each: a generall repentance for the one, not ſo for the other.* 39

3. *Some kinds of ſinning againſt knowledge exclude from mercy, which done ignorantly, leave a capacity of it.* 40

4. *Sinning againſt knowledge is the higheſt, but that of ſinning againſt the holy Ghoſt.* 41

6. *Reaſons.*

1. *Becauſe knowledge is the greateſt mercy.* 42

2. *Knowledg is the immediate guide of men in all their waies: a man ſins againſt his guide.* 43

That knowledge is ſo proved, in that an erroneous conſcience binds. 45

3. *Reaſon: Knowledge layeth a further obligation to obedience.* ibid.

Lawes come in force when promulged. 46

4. *There is the more contempt caſt on the law.* 47

5. *In ſins againſt knowledge the will of the ſinner cloſeth more with ſin, as ſin.* ibid.

6. *In sinning against knowledge, a man condemnes himselfe.* 48
Three things handled concerning sins against knowledge. ibid.
1. *What it is to sin against knowledg explained.* 49
1. *Distinction. To sinne with knowledge and against knowledge doe differ.* ibid.
A regenerate man guilty of more sins knowne than another. ibid.
Yet not of more sins against knowledge. 50
2. *Distinction. Men sin against knowledg either objectively or circumstantially only.* 51
1. *What it is to sinne directly against knowledge.* ibid.
2. *What to sinne against knowledge circumstantially onely.* ibid.
This distinction explained out of this Chap. ibid.
Sinnes directly against knowledge reduced to two heads. 52
1. *In regard of our selves 5. wayes.* ibid.
1. *When we abuse knowledg to help us to sin.* ib.
3. *Wayes.*
1. *To plot and contrive sin.*
2. *To colour sins committed by lyes.*
3. *To colour sins by pretence of religion, and use their knowledg of religion to plead for and justifie their sin.* ibid.
2. *When men neglect to get knowledge that might preserve them from sinning.* 53
3. *When men refuse knowledge that they may sin more freely.* 55
4. *Is to hate the light, and to endevour to extinguish it.* 55

5. *When*

5. *When men hold opinions ag: their consciences.* 57
2. *Men sin directly against knowledge it selfe in respect of others.* 58
1. *By concealing knowledge.* ibid.
2. *Men indevor to suppresse knowledg in others.* ib.
3. *When men go about to make others sin against their consciences.* 59

2. Generall Branch.

Sins committed collaterally or circumstantially against knowledge. 60

It is done

1. *Either in particular acts of sinning, or*
2. *In continuing in an estate of sinning against knowledge.* ibid.

Particular instances being infinite. 61
A distinction is given concerning them. ibid.
1. *Some sins more transient.* ibid.
2. *Some more permanent and continued, untill recalled, though but once committed.* ibid.

Which are of all other most dangerous to commit, when against knowledge. 62
2. *Going on in a sinfull estate against knowledge.* ibid.

Three sorts of men thus sin:

1. *Such as for worldly ends forbear to professe Christ and his wayes, which they know to be such.* 63
2. *Those that defer repentance.* 65
3. *Apostate Professors goe on in an estate of sinning against knowledge.* ibid.

Application. 67

2. Head: *Rules whereby to estimate sins against knowledge.* 68

Of two sorts: before sinning, or in sinning. 69

1. *Before sinning,* 3. *Rules.*

1. *The*

1. *The more a man considers the issues and consequents of a sin.* ibid.
2. *The more consultation, and debates before.* 70
3. *The more testimonies and warnings against a sin.* 71
2. *Rules to measure the sinfulnesse of such acts in sinning,* 3. 73
1. *The lesse passion or temptation to a sinne against knowledge.* ibid.
2. *The more inward regreet, and sorow, & reluctancy, the stronger is the knowledg, & so more against it.* 75
3. *The more hardnesse of heart in committing a sin knowne to be a sin, the greater the sin, as it is a sin against knowledge.* 76
3. Head: *Aggravations drawn from the kind of that knowledge we sin against, which are five.* 77
The more strong the knowledg, the greater the sin. 78
1. *To sin against the inbred light of nature.* ibid.
2. *To sin against the light of education.* 80
3. *The more real & experimētal light men sin against.* 82
4. *The more shining the light is in the conscience, joyned with a taste, the greater the sin.* 83
5. *To sin against professed knowledge.* 85
How great an ingagement and motive it is to men of knowledg to turn to God, and to take heed of sinning. 87
1. *Such an one cannot sin so cheap as others: their sins are more costly and chargeable.* ibid.
And will have lesse pleasure in sinning. ibid.
2. *Such are given up to greater hardnesse of heart.* 88
3. *Such God gives up to the worst & grosseſt of sins.* ibid.
4. *At death, knowledge sinned against, gives up to more horror and despaire.* 89
5. *In hell it increaseth torment.* 90

FINIS.

AGGRAVATIONS OF SINNING AGAINST KNOWLEDGE.

ROM. 1. 21.

Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankfull, but became vaine in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkned.

THere are two generall aggravations the Apostle insists on, in these two Chapters, of the Gentiles sinfulnesse: First their *unthankfulnesse, ver.* 21. in *despising the riches of Gods goodnesse, Chap.* 2. 4. Secondly, of *Rebellion*, in sinning *against knowledge: That when they knew him, they glorified him not as God.* And of all other hee inculcateth this of sinning against knowledge, as the greatest: for bringing

in a long, large, and particular indictment of many severall sinnes, *Idolatry, ver.* 23. *unnaturall uncleannesse, ver.* 26. *&c.* and all *kinds of unrighteousnesse, ver.* 29. hee doth both in the beginning, and end of the bill, bring in this aggravation, that *they sinned* against knowledge in all these. So *ver.* 18. he begins the indictment and promulgation of Gods wrath above all for this, that *they withheld the truth in unrighteousnesse*; which was as much as all that unrighteousnesse committed, barely in it selfe considered: And then again in the end, when hee comes to pronounce sentence, he comes in with this, after all particulars had beene reckoned up, *Who knowing the judgement of God against those which doe such things, yet doe them.*

Doct. To sin against knowledge is the highest aggravation of sinning.

So that this Doctrine is cleare from hence, That *to sinne against knowledge*, either in omitting good duties which we know we ought to performe, or committing of sinnes we know wee ought not to doe, *is the highest aggravation* of sinfulnesse.

I put both in both sinnes of omission and commission: for so the particular sinnes the *Gentiles* are taxed for here, are of both sorts; as *not glorifying*, or *worshipping God*, as well as *turning his glory into a lye, &c.* to omit prayer, when your consciences tell you, you ought to doe it: to omit holy discourse, examining the heart, when you know you ought to doe them, are as well sinnes against knowledge, as to tell a lie against your knowledge, or as to steale and forsweare, or

murder, or be drunke, &c.

Now when I say, it is an aggravation to these sinnes, my meaning is this: That take any sinne thou thinkest most grosse, and view it barely in the act of it, put the act nakedly in the one scale, be it a sinne of uncleanesse, or drunkennesse; and then put this circumstance which was added to it in the other scale, that before and when thou diddest it, thou knewest it to be a sinne, this alone weighs as much, yea more than the sinne it selfe doth: that as it is said of *Herod*, that *he added this to all his other sinnes, that he cast Iohn in prison*, who told him of his *Herodias*, and so is made as much as all his former sinnes: so is this brought in here, that in and unto all their unrighteousnesse, this was added, *they with-held the truth*, the light of their consciences (which is as a Prophet from God) they did imprison *in unrighteousnesse, ver.* 18. And therefore when *Daniel* would convince *Balthazar* of his deservednesse to lose his Kingdome, and that he was not able to *hold weight in the ballance, Dan.* 5. 22. what puts he into the other scale against him to weigh him up, and to shew he was *too light, ver.* 21, 22? he tells him how his *father knew the God of heaven*, and how *that* his knowledge cost him seven yeares the learning among wild beasts, and *thou* (sayes he) *his sonne knewest all this, and yet didst not humble thy selfe.* Here is the aggravation weighs downe all: he knew the God of heaven against whom he sinned, and that judgement on his Father for his pride; and then withall he tels

him, that *this God, in whose hands is thy breath, and all thy wayes, thou hast not glorified.* I name this place among many others, because it is parallel with this in the text. Ile name no more, but give *reasons* and *demonstrations* for it.

First, *Demonstrations.*

1 Demonstrations of the point, by comparing it with other kinds of sinning.

The greatnesse of this kind of sinning might many wayes be made appeare; we will demonstrate it onely by comparing it with other kinds of sinning.

To sinne, though out of *simple ignorance*, when that ignorance is but the *causa sine qua non* of sinning, that is, so as if a man had knowne it a sinne, he had not done it, doth not yet make the fact not to be a sinne, though it lesseneth it. For *Luke* 12. 48. *He that did not know his Masters will, was beaten*, when the thing committed was worthy of stripes, though he did not know so much, because the thing deserves it. And the reason is, because the Law being once promulged, as 1. to *Adam* it was, and put into his heart, as the common ark of mankinde; though the tables be lost, yet our ignorance doth not make the Law of none effect. For the *Law of nature* for ever binds, that is, all that was written in *Adams* heart, because it was thereby then published in him, and to him for us. But *positive lawes*, as I may call them, as to *beleeve in Christ*, &c. anew delivered, bind not, but where they are publisht. *Iosiah* rent his clothes, when the booke of the Law was found, because the ordinances were not kept, although they had not knowne the Law of many yeares; yet because they

they ought to have knowne it, therefore for all their ignorance, he feared wrath would come upon all *Israel*. So also *Lev.* 5. 17. sinnes of ignorance were to be sacrificed for: yet however, it lesseneth the sin, therefore *he shall be beaten with few stripes*.

And sure, if ignorance lesseneth them, knowledge aggravates; for *contrariorum eadem est ratio*: therefore *he that knowes, shall be beaten with many stripes*. Yea such difference is there, that God is said to *wink* at sins of *ignorance*. *Acts* 17. 30. *The time of this ignorance God winks at*. While they had no knowledge, God tooke no notice: yea and he abates something for such sinnes, because the creature hath *a cloake*, hath something to say for its selfe; (as Christ sayes, *Iohn* 15. 22.) but when against knowledge, they have no cloak. Yea farther, *Christ* makes a *sinne of ignorance* to be *no sinne*, in comparison: So there, *If I had not spoken and done those workes never man did, they had had* [*no sinne.*] (That is) none in comparison, but *now they have no cloak*, no shelter to award the stripes, or plea to abate of them.

How much sinnes against knowledge doe transcend sins of ignorance.

And that you may see the ground of this vast difference betweene sinnes of ignorance, and against knowledge, consider first, that if a man sin (suppose the act the same) out of *ignorance* meerly, there may be a supposition, that if hee had knowne it, he would not have done it; and that as soone as he doth know it, he would or might repent of it. So 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. *If they had knowne, they had not crucified the Lord of Glory*. The like

1 In sins of ignorance there may be a supposition, if he had known it, he would not have done it: but not so in these.

sayes Christ of *Tyre, Sidon*, and *Gomorrha, that if the same things had beene done in them, they would have repented.* But now when a man knowes it afore, and also considers it in the very committing it, and yet doth it, then there is no roome for such a supposition, and lesse hope. For what is it that should reduce this man to repentance? is it not his knowledge? now if that had no power to keepe him from his sinne, then it may be judged, that it will not be of force to bring him to repentance for it; for by sinning the heart is made more hard, and the knowledge and the authority of it weakned and lessened, as all power is, when contemned and resisted, *Rom.* 1. 21. *their foolish heart becomes darker.* *Aristotle* himselfe hath a touch of this notion in the third of his Ethicks, that if a man sinne out of *ignorance*, when he knowes it, he repents of it; if out of *passion*, when the passion is over, he is sorry for what he hath done: but when a man sinnes deliberately, and out of knowledge, it is a signe he is fixed and set in mischiefe; and therefore it is counted wickednesse and malice. And hence it is, that those that have beene *enlightned* with the highest kind of light, but that of saving grace, *Heb.* 6. 4, 5. and *Heb.* 10. *If they sinne wilfully* after such a knowledge of the truth, God lookes on them, as those that will never repent. And therefore likewise the schoole gives this as the reason why the Devills sinne obstinately, and cannot repent, because of their full knowledge they sinne with; they know all in the full latitude that it may be

knowne, and yet goe on.

Secondly, the vaſt difference that in Gods account is put betweene *ſinnes of knowledge*, and of *ignorance*, will appeare by the different reſpect and regard that God hath to them, in the repentance he requires and accepts for them; and that both in the acts of repentance, and alſo in the ſtate of grace and repentance, upon which God accepts a man, or for want of which he rejecteth him.

2 The vaſt difference between them, appears in the repentance God accepts for each. A generall repentance for the one, not ſo for the other.

Firſt, when a man comes to performe the acts of repentance, and to humble himſelfe for ſinne, and to turne from it, God exacteth not, that ſins of ignorance ſhould particularly be repented of. But if they be repented of but in the generall, & in the lumpe, be they never ſo great, God accepts it. This is intimated *Pſal.* 19. 12. *Who can underſtand his errours? cleanſe me from my ſecret ſinnes*: that was confeſſion enough. But ſinnes of knowledge muſt be particularly repented of, and confeſſed, and that againe and againe, as *David* was forced to doe for his murder and adultery, or a man ſhall never have pardon. Yea farther, greater difference will appeare, in regard of the ſtate of grace and repentance: for a man may lye in a ſinne he doth not know to be a ſinne, and yet be in the ſtate of *Grace*, as the *Patriarchs* in *Poligamie*, and in divorcing their wives: but to *lye in a ſinne of knowledge*, is not compatible *with grace*: but unleſſe a man maintaineth a conſtant fight againſt it, hateth it, confeſſeth it, forſaketh it, hee cannot have mercy. This cannot ſtand with uprightneſſe

rightnesse of heart. A friend may keepe correspondencie with one, hee suspects not to be an enemy unto his friend, and be true to his friendship notwithstanding: but if hee knowes him to be an enemie, he must break utterly with the one, if he leanes to the other.

3 Some kinds of sinning against knowledge exclude frō mercy, which done ignorantly leave a capacity of it.

Thirdly, yet farther in the third place, so vast is the difference, that some kind of sins committed out of and against knowledge, utterly exclude from mercy for time to come; which done out of ignorance, remained capable of, and might have obtained it; as *persecuting the Saints, blaspheming Christ, &c.* *Pauls* will was as much in those acts themselves, and as hearty as those that sin against the *Holy Ghost*: for he was *mad* against the Church, and in these sins, as himselfe sayes, not sinning willingly herein onely, but being carried on with *fury*, as hot and as forward as the *Pharisees* that sinned that sinne: onely sayes hee, *1 Tim. 1. 13. I did it ignorantly, therefore I obtained mercie.* Though it was *ignorantly* done, yet there was *need of mercie*: but yet in that he did it but ignorantly, there was a capacity and place *for mercie*, which otherwise had not beene. But thus to sin *after a man hath received the knowledge of the truth*, shuts a man out from mercie, *Heb. 10.* and *there is no more sacrifice for sinne, for such sins*; I say, such sins as these, thus directly against the Gospell, when committed with knowledge. For sins against the Law, though against knowledge, there was an atonement, as appeares *Levit. 6.* from the 1. verse to the 8. where hee instanceth

in

in *forswearing*: But *to persecute the Saints*, and *Christs truth, with malice*, after knowledge of it, *there is no more sacrifice*: not that simply the sin is so great in the act it selfe of persecution, for *Paul* did it out of ignorance; but because it is out of knowledge: so vast a difference doth knowledge and ignorance put betweene the guilt of the same sinne.

4 Sinning against knowledge is the highest to sinning against the holy Ghost.

And therefore indeed, to conclude this in the last place, this is the highest step of the ladder, next to turning off: the very highest but that of sinning against the *Holy Ghost*: which must needs argue it the highest aggravation of sinning, when it ascends so high, when it brings a man to the brinck, and next to falling into the bottomlesse pit, irrecoverably. And therefore to *sinne presumptuously* (which is all one) and to *sinne against knowledge*, (as appears *Numb.* 15. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. it being there opposed to sinning out of ignorance, (such a sinne as *David* did, of whom it is said, 2 *Sam.* 12. 9. *that he despised the word of the Lord*: which phrase also is used to expresse sinnes of presumption, *ver.* 31. of that 15. of *Numbers*) To *sinne*, I say, *presumptuously*, is the highest step: So in *Davids* account, *Psal.* 19. 12, 13. For first he prayes, *Lord keepe me from secret sinnes*, (which he maketh sinnes of ignorance) and then next he prayes against *presumptuous sinnes*, (which, as the opposition shewes, are *sinnes against knowledge*:) For (sayes he) *if they get dominion over me, I shall not be free from* [*that great offence.*] That is, that unpardonable sinne, which shall never be forgiven: so as these are neerest it

of any other: yet not so, as that every one that fals into such a sinne commits it, but he is nigh to it, at the next step to it. For to commit that sinne, but *two things* are required; *light* in the *mind*, and *malice* in the *heart*: not *malice* alone, unlesse there be *light*; for then that Apostle had sinned it: so as knowledge is the Parent of it, *it is after receiving the knowledge of the truth*, Heb. 10.27,28.

Secondly, Reasons which are 6. 1. Because knowledge is the greatest mercie.

These are the *Demonstrations* of it, the *Reasons* are

First, because knowledge of God and his wayes, is the greatest mercie, next to saving grace: *Hee hath not dealt* [*so*] *with every Nation*. Wherein? *In giving the knowledge of his wayes*: and as it is thus, so to a nation, so to a man; and therefore *Christ* speaking of the gift *of knowledge*, and giving the reason why it so greatly condemneth, *Luke* 12.48. sayes, *For to whom* [*much*] *is given, much is required*. As if hee had said, To know his Masters will, that is the great talent of all other. There is a [*much*] in that. Thus it was in the Heathens esteeme also: They acknowledged their foolish wisdome in morall and naturall *Philosophie*, their greatest *excellencie*: and therefore *Plato* thanked God for three things, that he was a *man*, an *Athenian*, and a *Philosopher*. And *Rom.* 1.22. the Apostle mentions it as that excellencie they did professe. And *Salomon*, of all vanities sayes this is the best vanity, and that it *exceeds folly, as light doth darkenesse*, *Eccles.* 2. But surely much more is the *knowledge of the Law*, and *of God*, as we have it revealed to us; this must needs be much more excellent.

cellent. And so the Jewes esteemed theirs; as in this second Chapter of the Romanes, the Apostle shewes also of them, that they *made their boast of the Law, and their forme of knowledge of it, and approving the things that are excellent.* And what doe the two great books of the creatures, and the word, and all meanes else serve for, but to increase knowledge? If therefore all tend to this, this is then the greatest mercie of all the rest.

2. Reason. Knowledge is the immediate guide of men in all their wayes: A man sins against his Guide.

For secondly, God hath appointed knowledge as the immediate guide of men in all their wayes, to *bring* them to *salvation and repentance*, for to *that it leads them.* It is that same ἡγεμονικὸν, as the *Philosopher* call'd it: and therefore the *Law, Rom. 7. 12.* is compared to an *Husband*, (so farre as it is written in, or revealed in the heart) that as an *Husband is the guide of the wife in her youth*, so is the *Law* to the heart. And whereas *beasts* are ruled *by a bit and bridle*, God hee rules men by knowledge. And therefore if men be wicked, notwithstanding this light, they must needs sinne highly, seeing there is no other curbe for them, as they are men, but this: if he will deale with them as men, this is the onely way; and therefore if that will not doe it, it is supposed nothing will.

It is *knowledge* makes men capable of sin, which *beasts* are not; therefore the more knowledge, (if men be wicked withall) the more sinne must necessarily be reckoned to them: so as God doth not simply looke what mens actions and affections are, but chiefly what their knowledge is, and accordingly judgeth men more or lesse wicked. I may illustrate

lustrate this by that comparison, which I may allude unto: That as in *Kingdomes, God* measures out the wickednesse thereof, and so his punishments accordingly, principally, by the guides, the governors thereof, what they are, and what they doe; as in the 5. of *Ieremie*, the 4. verse it appeares; where first God looks upon *the poore* people, *but*, he excuseth them, *these are foolish, and know not the way of the Lord*: and therefore God would have beene moved to spare the Kingdome, notwithstanding their sins. But from them at the 5. verse he goes to view the *Rulers*, *I will get me to the great men, for these have knowne the way of the Lord*: *and* when he saw that *these had broken the bands*, then, *how shall I pardon thee for this?* So is it in his judgement towards a particular man: when God looks downe upon a man, and sees him in his courses exceeding loose, and wicked, hee looks first upon those rude affections in him, which are uncleane, prophane, debaucht, greedy of all wickednesse; Ay but sayes he, these are foolish of themselves, but I will looke upon his understanding, and upon the superiour faculties, which are the guides of these affections, and see what they dictate to these unruly affections, to restraine them: And when he findes that the guides themselves are enlightned, *and have knowne the way of the Lord*, and that the will and the affections, though informed with much knowledge, yet *break all bands*, then *how shall I pardon thee? Thee*, who art a knowing drunkard, and a knowing unclean person, &c. so as thus to sin, aggravates and maketh *sin out of measure sinfull*.

Now

Now that *knowledge* and *reason* is a mans *guide*, will further appeare by this: That even *erroneous knowledge* doth put an *obligation*, a *bond*, and a *tye* upon a man: which can be in no other respect, but because knowledge is appointed to be a mans guide. Thus if a man thinkes a thing (which is in it selfe *common* and *indifferent*) to be a *sinne*, and forbidden, (as *Rom.* 14. 4.) although the *Law* forbids it not, yet *to him it is uncleane*, though *in Christ* it is *not uncleane*, that is, by the *Law of Christ*. For, this his knowledge and judgement of the thing hath *to him the force of a Law*: for it propounds it to him as a *Law*, and *as from God*; which *reason* of *his*, *God* hath appointed as his *immediate guide*: and the *will* is to follow nothing that is *evill*, which is represented to it, as evill; this is the *Law of meere nature* in all conditions; therefore if a man should doe an action which is in it self good, if he thought it to be evill, he should sinne, and so *è contra*, for he goes against the dictate of nature. So that *erroneous knowledge*, though against the Law, is a *law to me*, though not *per se*, yet *per accidens*. Now therefore if to go against a false light of conscience be yet a sinne, though it proves that the commandement allowes the thing was done, and was for it, then to go against the true light of the Law, how sinfull is it?

That knowledge is so, proved, in that an erroneous conscience bindeth.

Againe, thirdly, the knowledge of the law binds the person so much the more to obedience, by how much the more he knowes it: so as though it would be a sinne, when he knowes not the Law to transgresse it, yet when he knowes it, it is a greater sinne.

3 Knowledg layeth a further obligation to obedience.

sinne. 'Tis true indeed, that *conscience* and the *Law*, when they meet, make up but *one Law*, not two distinct Laws: and therefore in *sinning against knowledge*, though a man doth not commit two distinct sinnes, yet the knowledge of it doth adde a further degree of sinfulnesse to it: As a cloath is the same cloath when it is white, that it was when it is dyed with a scarlet dye; yet then it hath a *dye*, a *tincture* given it, which is more worth than the cloath: and so when you sinne, not knowing the Law, the sin is the same for substance, it would be if you had known it; yet that knowledge dyes it, makes it a *scarlet sinne*, as *Esay* speaks, farre greater and deeper in demerit than the sinne it selfe: and the ground of this is, because *Lawes then come to be in force, when they are promulged*, and made known: so as the *more* they are *promulged* and knowne, the *more* is the *force* of their *binding*, and so the greater *guilt*. Therefore *Deut.* 11. 12. 3. 8. God straitens the cords more, the binding force of the law more upon those Jewes consciences, to whom he at the first personally with majesty had promulgated it, than upon their children, though upon theirs also. Now if all Gods Lawes, being made knowne to *Adam*, binde us, and are in force, and this when we know them not; then if we do know them, or might know them, they binde much more: and still the more clearely wee know them, the obligation increaseth, and the guilt insuing with it: and the rather, because now when wee come to know them, they are anew promulged, in a way of a peculiar mercie; wee having defaced

Lawes come in force when promulged.

the

the knowledge of them in our fall.

Fourthly, when the *Law*, being *knowne*, is *broken*, there is the more *contempt* cast upon the *Law*, and the *Law-giver* also; and so a higher degree of sinning. And therefore *Numbers* 15.30. *He that sinnes out of knowledge*, is said *to reproach the Lord*, and *to despise the word*. And therefore *Saul* sinning against knowledge, *Samuel* calleth it *rebellion*: and though it were but in a small thing, yet he parallels it with witchcraft. So also *Iob* 24.13. *they are said to rebell*, when they *sinne against light*; because rebellion is added to disobedience: For knowledge is an *Officer* set to see the *Law executed*, and fulfilled; and makes God present to the conscience. Therefore *Rom.* 2.14. it is called a *witnesse*; and therefore in *sinning against knowledge*, men are said to *sinne before the face of the Lord himselfe*; now what a great contempt is that? Therefore also *Psal.* 50. the *hypocrite sinning against knowledge*, is said to *cast the law of God behind his back*: so as there is a contempt in this sinning, which is in no other.

4. There is the more contempt cast upon the Law.

Fiftly, the more *knowledge* a man sinneth against, the more *the will* of the sinner is discovered to be for *sinne*, as *sinne*. Now *voluntarium est regula & mensura actionum moralium*: *willingnesse in sinning*, is the *standard and measure of sinnes*. The lesse will, the lesse sinne: so much is cut off, the lesse the will closeth with it; at least wise so much is added, by how much the will is more in it: and therefore the highest degree of sinning is expresst to us by *sinning willingly*, and this *after knowledge*, *Heb.* 10. Now though

5. In sins against knowledge the will of the sinner closeth more with sin, as sin.

though an ignorant man commits the act as willingly, as when *Paul* persecuted the Church, yet he commits it not considered *as sinne*, till he hath the knowledge of it: but then when it is discovered to be sinne, and the more clearely it is so discovered, the will may be said to joyn with it as sinne. Therefore the Apostle sayes, *To him that knowes to doe well, and doth it not, to him it is sinne.* *Iames* 4. 17. because by his knowledge the thing is represented as sinne; and so he closeth with it the more, under that notion and apprehension.

6 In sinning against knowledge a man condemns himselfe.

Sixtly, in sinning *against knowledge*, a man *condemns himselfe*; but when out of *ignorance* meerely, the *Law* onely doth condemne him. So *Rom.* 2. 1. *A man* having *knowledge* in *that wherein hee judgeth another, he condemneth himselfe.* So *Rom.* 14. Now as *self-murder* is the *highest* degree of murder, and an aggravation of it; so *self-condemning* must needs be reckoned. God tooke it as a great advantage over him that hid his talent, that *out of thine owne mouth I will condemne thee, thou wicked servant.*

3. Things handled concerning sins against knowledge.

The doctrine being thus proved, First, I will explaine, *what it is to sin against knowledge.*

Secondly, I will give the *aggravations* of it.

Thirdly, I will give *rules* to *measure sinnes of knowledge by*, and the greatnesse of them in any act.

Lastly, the use of all.

For the first, what it is to sinne against knowledge. First, to explaine it, I premise these distinctions.

The

The firſt diſtinction. That it is one thing to ſinne *with knowledge*, another thing *againſt knowledge*.

1. What it is to ſinne gainſt knowledge, explained.
1. Diſtinction. To ſinne *with knowledge* and *againſt knowledge* doe differ.

There are many ſinnes doe paſſe from a man *with his knowledge*, which yet are not *againſt knowledge*. This is to be obſerved for the removall of a ſcruple which may ariſe in ſome that are godly, who elſe may be wounded with this doctrine through a miſtake.

A *regenerate man* is, and muſt needs be ſuppoſed guilty of *more knowne ſinnes*, than an *unregenerate man*: and yet he commits *fewer againſt knowledge*, than he.

A regenerate man guilty of more ſinnes *knowne*, than another.

Firſt, I ſay, hee is *guilty of more knowne ſinnes*: For he takes notice of every ſinfull diſpoſition that is ſtirring in him, every by-end, every contrariety unto holineſſe, deadneſſe to duty, reluctancie to ſpirituall duties: and when regenerated, beginneth to ſee and know more evill by himſelfe, than ever he did before: he ſees as the Apoſtle ſayes of himſelfe, *Rom.* 7. 10. *all concupiſcence*: and the holier a man is, the more he diſcernes and knowes his ſins: So ſayes the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 7. 18. *I know that in me dwels no good thing*. And *ver.* 21. *I finde when I would doe good, evill is preſent with me*. And 23. *I ſee another law*. All theſe, he ſayes, he perceived and found daily in himſelfe: and the more holy that he grew, the more he ſaw them. For the purer and clearer the light of Gods Spirit ſhines in a man, the more ſinnes he knowes: he will ſee luſts ſteaming up, flying in his heart, like moates in the ſun, or ſparkes out of a furnace, which elſe he had

not seene: the clearer the sun-beame is which is let into the heart, the more thou wilt see them.

Yet not of more sinne against knowledge.

But yet in the second place, I adde, that nevertheless he *sinnes lesse against knowledge*: For then wee are properly said to sinne against knowledge, when wee doe take the fulfilling of a lust, or the performance of an outward action, a dutie, or the like, into deliberation and consideration, and consider motives against the sinne, or to the dutie, and yet commit that sinne, yeeld to it, and nourish that lust, and omit that dutie: Here now we sinne not onely *with knowledge*, but *against knowledge*: because knowledge stept in, and opposed us in it, comes to interrupt and prevent us: but now in those failings in dutie, and stirring of lusts in the regenerate afore mentioned, the case is otherwise: they are committed indeed with knowledge, but not against it: For it is not in the power of knowledge to prevent them; for *motus primo primi non cadunt sub libertatem*; but yet though such sinnes will arise againe and againe, yet sayes a good heart, *they must not think to passe uncontrouled and unseene*: Therefore let not poore soules mistake me, as if I meant, throughout this discourse, of all sins which are knowne to be sinnes, but I meane such sinnes as are committed against knowledge: that is, when knowledge comes and examines a sinne, in or before the committing of it, brings it to the Law, contests against it, condemnes it, and yet a man approveth it, and consenteth to it; when a dutie and a sinne are brought before knowledge, as *Barrabas* and *Christ* afore *Pilate*, and thy knowledge doth

againe

againe and againe tell thee such a sinne is a great sinne, and ought to be crucified, and yet thou crycest, let it goe; and so for the duty, it tels thee again and againe it ought to be submitted unto, and yet thou omittest it, and committest the sin, choosest *Barrabas* rather than *Christ*, these are sinnes against knowledge: now such sins against knowledg break a mans peace, and the more consideration before had, the more the peace is broken.

The second distinction is, that men sinne against knowledg, either *directly*, or *collaterally*: *objectively*, or *circumstantially*.

2. Distinction. Men sin against knowledge, either *objectively*, or *circumstantially* onely.

First *directly*: when *knowledge* it selfe is the thing men abuse, or fight against, becommeth the *object*, the *terminus*, the butt and mark shot at; this is to sin directly against knowledge it selfe.

1 What it is to sin *directly* against knowledge.

The second way, *collaterally*, is, when knowledge is but a *circumstance* in our sinnes: so as the pleasure of some sinne (we know to be a sin) is the thing aimed at; & that our knowledge steps but in between to hinder us in it, and we commit it notwithstanding, *though we doe know it*; here knowledge is indeed sinned against, yet but *collaterally*, and as a stander by, but as a circumstance onely, shot at *per accidens*, *concomitanter*, and by the by, as one that steps in to part a fray is smitten, for labouring to hinder them in their sin, as the Sodomites quarrelled with *Lot*: they are both found in this Chapter, and therefore come fitly within the compasse of this discourse.

2 What to sinne against knowledg *circumstantially* onely.

This distinction explained out of this Chapter.

First, This *collaterall* kinde of sinning against knowledge is mentioned in the 21. verse, where he

saies, *They knew God, yet they glorified him not*: there knowledge is made but a circumstance of their sinning; they sinned against it but collaterally. But then that other kind of sinning directly against knowledge, is mentioned ver. 28. *They liked not to retaine God in their knowledge*: that is, they hated this knowledge it selfe, so as now they did not onely love sin, they knew to be sin, but also they loved not the knowledge of it; so that because both are thus clearly instanced in, wee will speake of both more largely.

Sins directly against knowledg reduced to two Heads.

Now sinnes *directly against knowledge* it selfe are many: I will reduce the chiefe heads of them into two branches:

First, in regard of our selves.
Secondly, in regard of others.

1. In regard of our selves five wayes.

First, in regard of our selves, five wayes we may thus sin against knowledge it selfe.

When we abuse knowledge to help us to sin, 3. wayes.

1. To plot and contrive sinne.

First, when we abuse knowledge to helpe us to sinne: as first, to plot and contrive a sin, as *Judas* plotted to betray his Master, if hee could *conveniently*; so the text sayes, *Mark* 14. 11. hee would doe it wisely: and thus those that came to intrap Christ with most cunning *questions*, did sinne, and those who plot against the just, as *Psal*. 37. 12.

2. To colour sins committed by lyes.

So secondly, when men use their wisedoms to tell a cunning lye, to cover a sin; as *Plato* sayes, men of knowledge, *sunt ad mendacia potentiores & sapientiores*: whereas fooles, though they would lye, yet often tell truth ere they are aware.

3. To colour sins by pretence of religion, and use their knowledg of religion to plead for and justifie their sins.

But also thirdly, when they abuse morall knowledge, which yet, as *Aristotle* sayes, is leastapt

to

to be (I am ſure ſhould leaſt be) abuſed, ſo as to make a ſhew of good pretences to cover their ſins, and diſſemble them; not onely by finding out ſome cunning artificiall colour, as *David* did in the matter of *Vriah* — *Chance of warre* (ſayes he) *falls to all alike:* but when men are ſo impudently hypocriticall, as to make uſe of religious pretexts, (as the Devill ſometimes doth) as *Saul*, who pretends to *Samuel*, *I have done the will of the Lord:* and when *Samuel* told him of the cattell, oh, ſayes he, *they are for a ſacrifice*; when God had expreſly commanded to kill them all. But this ſhift ſhifted him out of his Kingdome, *Samuel* pronounceth him a *rebell in it*, *Rebellion is ſinne againſt knowledge*, therefore he knew it. Thus alſo *Iezabel* coloured over the ſtoning of *Naboth* with a ſolemne faſt. So *Judas* fiſheth for money with a charitable pretence, *This might have beene ſold, and given to the poore*. In ſins againſt knowledge, uſually the mind indevours to find out a colour, and that provokes God more than the ſinne, becauſe we goe about to mock him. We ſee men cannot endure a ſhift, much leſſe the All-knowing God, not to be mocked: and we ſee it is hard to convince ſuch an one. *David* was faine to be brought to the rack, ere he would confeſſe, when he had a ſhift; and men doe ſeeke ſuch ſhifts onely in caſe of ſinning againſt conſcience: for elſe there were no need, they would be ſure to plead ignorance, as *Abimelech* did.

2 When men neglect to get knowledge that might preſerve them from ſinning, &c.

Secondly, when men neglect the getting and obtaining of *knowledge*, which knowledge might keep & hinder them frō ſinning, and might make them

expert in duties. This is as much as to ſin againſt knowledge, although the ſins be committed out of ignorance: yet that ignorance being through their owne default, it comes all to one: when it may be ſaid of men, as the Apoſtle doth of the *Hebrewes, Chap.*5.12. *That for the time they have had to learn, they might have beene teachers; they had yet need be taught againe the firſt principles.* If a man had an Apprentice, who through negligence and want of heeding, and obſerving what hee daily ſees and heares about his trade, might have got for his time much knowledge in his trade, whereby he might have ſaved his maſter much, which hee now hath loſt him; and rid and perfected much worke, hee daily ſpoiles him; ſuch careleſſe blockiſh ignorance it is juſt for his maſter to correct him for, and to charge on him all that waſte and loſſe, becauſe he might have knowne how to have done better. And therefore even they who thought ignorance in it ſelfe no ſin (wherein they erred) yet the neglect of knowledge upon this very ground, they thought a great ſinne, and that it would be ſo farre from excuſing ſinnes, as that it would aggravate them. So here we ſee theſe Gentiles ſhall not onely be reckoned with for the actuall knowledge, they had attained to, and ſinned againſt; but alſo for what they might have had, and have picked out of the creatures. For ſo the Apoſtle brings in this here in the 20. verſe, that the power of God being cleerly ſeen in the creatures, they neglecting to ſpell and reade it, ſo much knowledg as they might have got, God will reckon to them, and aggravate their ſins by.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, which is yet much worſe, when men refuſe knowledge, that they may ſinne the more freely; and doe ſtop the eare, leſt they ſhould be charmed: As when men are loath, and afraid, and dare not reade ſuch a booke as diſcovers, or might diſcover that truth to them, the ſubmiſſion to which would prejudice them, and this to the end that they may plead ignorance of their ſinne. Thus alſo thoſe that aſſent not to truth when it comes in ſtrongly upon them, but ſeek to evade it. But 1 *Cor.* 14. 38. when the Apoſtle had cleerely diſcovered the truth in thoſe things controverted, ſo as *who ever was ſpirituall*, or not fully blind, might ſee, and would acknowledge the truth: then he ſhuts up his diſcourſe about them, ver. 27. *If any be ignorant, let him be ignorant:* for it is wilfull, *it is affected*; hee ſpeakes it, as elſewhere, *Revel.* laſt, it is ſaid, *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill:* that is, hee that will be unjuſt, and refuſeth to turne, let him goe on. This is a great ſinne, for God, you ſee, gives ſuch a man over: one that is but neglectfull, or dull of capacity, God will take paines with him, to teach him, and beare with him, as Chriſt did with his Diſciples: but if he be wilfully ignorant, he lets him die in his ignorance, and yet will reckon with him, as if all his ſinnes had beene committed againſt knowledge, becauſe hee refuſed to know.

3 When men refuſe knowledge that they may ſin more freely.

The fourth is to hate the light, and to endevour to extinguiſh it. This is yet much worſe, when men hate the Word, and the Miniſters of it, the examples of Gods people, and the light they carry with

4 Is to hate the light, and to endevour to extinguiſh it.

with them (they *ſhining as lights in a crooked generation*, *Phil.* 2. 15. and yet they hate theſe, as theeves doe a torch in the night, and fly againſt the light, as batts doe, and as the *Iewes* did, *Iohn* 3. 20.) This *Chriſt* ſayes is the *great condemning* ſinne of all others. So theſe Gentiles put *Socrates* to death for reproving them. And thus men ſinne alſo, when they labour to extinguiſh the light in their owne conſciences, and *like not to retaine God in their knowledge*, *verſe* 28. but would ſtudie the art of forgetfulneſſe: When men have put the candle out, and drawne the curtaines, that they may ſinne, and ſleepe in ſin more freely and ſecurely. Thus thoſe alſo ſin in a higher meaſure, who have had a cleare conviction, that they ought to be thus ſtrict, and ought to ſanctifie the Lords day, and pray privately, but now have loſt this light, and think they need not be ſo ſtrict: when men *continue not* in what they *were once aſſured of*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Tim.* 3. 14. theſe ſinne againſt their knowledge, and are the worſt of ſuch ſinners: and this eſtate *Ariſtotle* himſelfe makes *ſtatum maligni*, *the ſtate of a wicked one*, *namely*, when the ſparkes of light are extinguiſht or hated. For when any mans *light is* loſt and *turned into darkneſſe* by ſinning, then, as Chriſt ſayes, *how great is that darkneſſe?* When good lawes are not onely not enacted and embraced, but repealed alſo, (it is *Ariſtotles* ſimilitude, to diſtinguiſh an incontinent perſon, and a wicked man) this is an high kind of ſinning: So of theſe Gentiles it is ſaid, *their fooliſh heart was darkned*; they had extinguiſht ſome of that light God gave them.

them. As ſome drink away their wits, ſo ſome ſin away their conſciences; and thus by degrees, they firſt ſinne away the light of the word they had, as they in *Iude*, who were religious once, and then they quench even that little ſparke of nature that is left. Alſo verſe 10. *corrupting themſelves in what they know naturally.*

5 When men hold opinions againſt their conſciences.

Fiftly, Men ſinne againſt knowledge yet worſe, when they hold opinion againſt their knowledge. So many are ſaid to doe, in 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. he foretels they ſhould ſpeake lyes in *Hypocriſie*, and invent lyes that ſhould have a pretence of holineſſe; which they *know* to be a lye, or elſe they ſhould not be ſaid to ſpeake *lyes in hypocriſie*; but they doe it to maintaine their honour and greatneſſe, which muſt downe, if their doctrine prove falſe: and though many are given up *to beleeve* their lyes, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 11. as a puniſhment of their not *loving the truth*; yet others of them ſhall know they are lies, and yet vent them for truths. Thus when men faſhion their opinion to the times and wayes of preferment, and their dependances on Great ones, or to maintaine and uphold a faction, or out of pride, having broached an error, maintaine it, though the pulling out that one tile doth untile all the houſe. Theſe are the two cauſes given of perverting the truth, 1 *Tim.* 6. 4, 5. namely, *pride* and *covetouſneſſe*, and ſuppoſing *gaine godlineſſe*, and ſo faſhioning their religion accordingly: when men are *Knights* of the poſt, that will write or ſpeak any thing, whereby they may get gaine and preferment.

2. Men sin *directly against knowledge* it selfe in respect of *others*,

1 By concealing knowledge.

Secondly, men sin against knowledge in regard of others.

First, by concealing it: the Apostle indeed sayes in a certaine case, *Hast thou knowledge? keepe it to thy selfe.* He speakes it of opinions, or practices about things indifferent, which might scandalize the weake; but if thou hast knowledge, which may edifie thy brother, thou oughtest to communicate it. *Socrates*, knowing there was but one God, said, in his Apologie for his life, that if they would give him life, upon condition to keep that truth to himselfe, and not to teach it to others, hee would not accept life upon such a condition: and I remember he expresseth his resolution in words very nigh the same words the *Apostles* used, *Acts* 4. 20. *whether it be better to obey God than men, judge you:* and, *we cannot but teach the things wee have heard and seene*, sayes Christ: for knowledge is a thing will boyle within a man for vent, and cannot be imprisoned: It is light, and the end why light was made, was to be set up to give light. And Christ argues from an apparent absurdity to put a light under a bushell, which may give light to all the house; Hast thou knowledge of God and of his wayes, thou canst not but speake (if withall thou hast but a good heart) to all in the familie, to thy wife in thy bosome, &c. God took it for granted, that *Abraham* would teach his children what he should know from him: The same disposition is in all the children of *Abraham*.

2 Men endevour to suppresse knowledge in others.

Secondly, when men endeavour to suppresse knowledge. As the *Pharisees*, they *kept the keyes of it*

it in their hands, and would not open the treaſures of it themſelves, nor let others doe it neither. So they (*Acts* 4.16.) *could not deny but a great miracle* was done by the Apoſtles (ſay themſelves) *but that it ſpread no further, let us threaten them, and charge them, that they ſpeake no more in his name*. And this they did againſt their conſciences by their owne profeſſion, *we cannot deny it*: as if they had ſaid, if wee could we would, but it was too manifeſt it was the truth. So when Maſters keep their ſervants from the meanes of knowledge, they are thus guilty.

Thirdly, when wee would make others ſinne againſt their conſciences. The *Phariſes*, when the blind man would not ſay as they ſaid, they caſt him out; they would have had him ſay that *Chriſt was a ſinner*, when through the ſmall light he had, hee judged it evident enough, that a ſinner ſhould not doe ſuch a miracle, as was never done ſince the world began. And ſo *Iezabel* made the Judges, and witneſſes ſinne againſt conſcience in accuſing *Naboth*: and ſo ſome of the Gentiles, that would hold correſpondencie with the Jewes, would have conſtrained the *Galathians* to be circumciſed, *Gal.6.* 12. Thoſe that knew that circumciſion was to be aboliſht, yet they would perſwade them to it by a clubb argument, drawn from avoiding perſecution, not from evidence of the Truth, or by reaſons that might convince them, and their conſciences: therfore he ſayes, they *conſtrained thē*. The perſwaders might indeed *glory*, as having their cauſe and ſide ſtrengthened, but they wanne little credit to

3 When men go about to make others ſinne againſt their conſciences. Iohn 9.

their cause by it; for as the perswaders arguments were suited to flesh, so the others yeelding was out of flesh, and *so they glory in your flesh* and weakness, sayes he; as the Papists urged *Cranmer.*, not by arguments, but threats and promises to recant; this is the greatest cruelty in the world, to have a man murder himselfe, stab his conscience. To offend a weak conscience is a sinne, if but passively, when thou dost something before his face, which his conscience is against: but if thou makest him wound his own conscience, and to doe an act himselfe, which his owne conscience is against, it is much worse: as if thou beest a Master, and hast a servant who pleadeth *conscience*, that hee cannot lye for thy advantage in thy shop, or who will not doe unlawfull businesses on the *Sabbath* day, and pleads conscience, wilt thou smite him and whip him? *God will smite thee, thou whited wall.* How darest thou smite him, and so cause him to doe that for which God will whip him worser? Shew mercy to those under you, enforme their consciences, wring them not, you may hap to break the wards if you doe.

a. Generall Branch: Sins committed collaterally or circumstantially against knowledge.

It is done, 1. Either in particular acts of sinning, or 2. In continuing in an estate of sinning against knowledge.

Now for sinnes committed *collaterally*, or *per modum circumstantiæ* (that I may so expresse it) against knowledge, they are done either when particular acts of sinne are committed, and duties omitted, against light and knowledge; and so the Saints may and doe often sinne against knowledge. Or,

Secondly, in regard of a knowne estate of sinne, and impenitencie persisted in; when men continue, and

and goe on in ſuch a ſtate againſt conviction of conſcience, that ſuch is their eſtates.

For the firſt, becauſe particular acts of ſin committed againſt knowledge are infinite, and there will be no end of inſtancing in particulars, therefore I will not inſiſt: Onely in briefe this diſtinction concerning ſuch acts may be obſerved, and the obſervation of it may be uſefull: That ſome *acts* of ſinnes *againſt knowledge*, are meerely *tranſient*: that is, are done and ended at once. And though the guilt of them is eternall, yet the extent of the act is finiſhed with the committing it, and reacheth no further: as a vaine oath, breach of the Sabbath, &c. which acts cannot be repealed, though they may be repented of. But others there are, which though the act may be but once outwardly and profeſſedly done, yet have an habituall and continued permanency, life, & ſubſiſtence given it, ſuch as that untill a man doth recall them, hee may be ſaid continually to renew thoſe acts, and every day to be guilty of them, and to maintaine it; and ſo habitually to cõmit them. As it is with Laws, which though made but once, are yet continued acts of the State, whileſt they ſtand in force unrepealed: ſo is it in ſome ſins. For inſtance, when a man doth take goods from his neighbour unjuſtly, the act indeed is done but once: but till hee reſtores them, he may be ſaid to ſteale them; every day, every houre, he continues to doe it habitually; So a man having ſubſcribed to falſhood, or recanted the truth publiquely, the act, though done but once, yet untill a retractation be ſome wayes made, hee

Particular inſtances being infinite.

A diſtinction is given concerning them.

1. Some ſinnes more tranſient.

2. Some more permanent and continued, until recalld, though but once committed.

Which are of all other moſt dangerous to commit, when againſt knowledge.

continues that act, and ſo is daily anew guilty of it. So if a man ſhould marry one, whom it is unlawfull for him to marry, (as *Herod* did) though that ſinfull act of eſpouſals, whereby they entred into it, was ſoon diſpatcht; yet, till a divorce, he lives in a continuall ſin. And ſuch acts (of this latter ſort I meane) againſt knowledge are moſt dangerous to commit; becauſe to continue thus in them, though but once committed, hazards a mans eſtate; and therefore men find, when they come to repent, the greateſt ſnare, and trouble, and difficulty in ſuch kind of ſins; to extricate themſelves out of them by a meet and true repentance.

But as concerning the firſt branch of this diſtinction, namely, of particular acts committed againſt knowledge; beſides this laſt diſtinction briefly touched; I will anon give you ſeverall aggravations and rules whereby to meaſure the ſinfulneſſe that is in ſuch acts ſo committed: but in the meane time the ſecond branch of this former diſtinction muſt be inſiſted upon, and therefore I will bring in theſe aggravations and rules which concerne particular acts, as diſtinct heads, after I have briefly ſpoken to this other, which is, That

2. Going on in a ſinfull eſtate againſt knowledge.

Secondly, thoſe ſinne againſt knowledge, who goe on in an eſtate of ſin and impenitencie, which they know to be damnable: As *Pharaoh*, *Exod.* 9. 27. who confeſt that he and his people were wicked, and yet hardned himſelfe in ſinne moſt dangerouſly: and yet three ſorts of men may apparently be convinced thus to ſin.

Three ſorts of men thus ſin:

Firſt, thoſe that keep out, and with-draw themſelves

selves from professing Christ and his wayes, and the feare of his name, out of shame or feare of man, or losse of preferment, or the like worldly ends, when yet they are convinced that they are Gods wayes, and ought to be professed by them. I doe not say, that all, who doe not come in to professe Christ, and that doe not joyne themselves with his people, that they goe on against knowledge; for many are ignorant, and mistaken about them: but when men are convinced of the truth, and necessity of professing and *confessing* of it even *unto salvation*, (as the Apostle speaks, *Rom.* 10) and yet out of fear, or shame, keep still on the other side, drawing in their hornes all together. These goe on in an estate of impenitencie against knowledg; for put all these together, and it must needs appeare to be so: as First, when they are convinced that this is the truth, and that salvation and the power of religion is onely to be found in such wayes and men: and Secondly, that these are to be practiced and professed, and yet Thirdly, out of shame, &c. keepe still a loofe off, and goe on a contrary way; these must needs know, that they goe on in an estate of impenitencie against knowledge. This was the case of many of the *Pharises*, who therefore sinned highly: they beleeved, and were convinced, that Christ was the Messiah; and so then to be confest, and followed, and to be cleaved unto: and then also they must needs know, that his followers onely were the *Children* of God: Yet *Ioh.* 12. 42. it is said, *though they* thus *beleeved on him*, yet they *durst not confesse him for feare of the Iewes*, and of the *Pharises*,

1 Such as for worldly ends forbear to professe Christ and his waies, which they know to be such.

Phariſes, and of being *put out of the Synagogues*. At the latter day, Chriſt ſhall not need to ſever ſuch from the reſt, as hee will doe the ſheepe from the goats; for they willingly remaine all their dayes amongſt them, whom they know to be goats, and refuſe the company, and fould, and food, and marks of the ſheep, which they know to be ſuch: they may apologize, and make fair with the Saints, that their hearts are with them, but they will be rankt at the day of Judgement, as here they ranked themſelves, *with the workers of iniquity*. Of theſe doth the Pſalmiſt ſpeake, *Thoſe that turne aſide by their crooked wayes, them ſhall the Lord leave with the workers of iniquity*.

Pſal.125.ult.

Thoſe alſo thus ſinne, and are to be joyned with theſe, who know the tearms and condition of ſalvation, and how they muſt part with all for Chriſt, and yet will not come to the price; ſuch doe goe deſperately on againſt knowledge in a bad eſtate, and doe judge themſelves unworthy of eternall life. Thus the young man in the Goſpell, he was told, that he was to ſell all, and that was the condition, and hee knew heaven was worth it, and was convinced of the truth herein, that thus he ought to doe, *for he went away ſorrowfull*: now if he had not knowne that he went away without happineſſe, he needed not have beene ſorrowfull at all; but he knew the bargaine of ſalvation was not ſtruck up, and likewiſe what it ſtuck at, and yet ſtill reſted in his former condition, and choſe rather to enjoy his many poſſeſſions: This man now went on in his ſtate againſt knowledge.

Secondly,

Secondly, as alſo thoſe who upon the ſame or like ground defer their repentance, theſe go on in a bad eſtate, and muſt needs know they doe ſo; for in that they promiſe to repent hereafter, and take up purpoſes to doe it, when they have gone on a little while longer, to adde drunkenneſſe to thirſt, they doe thereby profeſſe that there is a work of grace, which they muſt attaine to, ere they can be in the ſtate of grace: for they would not promiſe ſo much hereafter, but that they know not how, without ſuch a work, they ſhould be ſaved. Whileſt therefore ſuch ſhall reſt without preſent endevouring after it, ſo long they are judged in themſelves to be in a bad eſtate at preſent. When men know the curſes due to their preſent eſtate, and yet ſay as hee, *Deut.* 29. 19. *I will goe on in the way of my heart, and ſhall have peace* afterward. This man ſinnes moſt highly, and therefore Gods wrath *ſmoakes againſt that man*, and he ſayes of him, that *he will not be mercifull to him*, in that place.

2 Thoſe that defer repentance.

Thirdly, ſunk and broken profeſſors, ſuch cannot but goe on in a bad eſtate againſt knowledge, when either men are falne from the practice and profeſſion of what is good, which once they thought neceſſarie to ſalvation; or when they continue to hold forth their profeſſion in *Hypocriſie*. *Thoſe that have eſcaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of Ieſus Chriſt*, but are returned to their vomit againe, ſome of theſe are ingenious, and acknowledge both themſelves faln, & their preſent eſtate moſt miſerable, and yet goe on in it; and ſuch are to be pittyed, but yet are in a moſt dan-

3 Apoſtate profeſſors goe on in an eſtate of ſinning againſt knowledge.

gerous condition. *Saul* when he was fallen away, yet had this ingenuity a while left, hee desired *Samuel* to pray to his God for him, and told *David*, that he was more righteous than he; yet still went on in his courses, and in the end (as some have thought) sinned against the *Holy Ghost*.

But others there are, who though they be fallen from all the inward, powerfull and secret performance of duties they once did practice, and from all conscience of sinning, yet retain their profession which they know to be but an out-side: these of all others goe on against knowledge: and *Rev.*22.15. they are said *to make a lye*; not onely to *tell a lye* in words, but to *make a lye* in deeds. Now a lye is a sin of all others most against knowledge, and indeed against a double knowledge, both *facti* and *juris*: & so is this. 1. That they professe themselves to be that they know they are not. 2. That they will not endevour after that state they know they ought to get into, if ever saved. This is the condition of many, who being convinced of the power of religion, have launched forth into a profession, and hoyst up saile, but now the tyde is fallen, the spirit withdrawne, the conscience of sinne extinguisht in them; yet for their credit sake still beare their sails up as high as ever: even as many Merchants doe, who are sunk in their estates, still beare a faire shew, yea will seeme richer than ordinary, by purchasing lands, &c. Such a professor was *Iudas*, hee began seriously, and thought to have gone to heaven, and was earnest in good duties at first: as they also, 2 *Pet.*2.18. they *really*, or ὄντως, escaped the *pollutions*

tions of the world, *through the knowledge of Christ*: but in the end *Iudas* became a *grosse hypocrite*, one that pretended the poore, when he loved the bag; and on the sudden betrayed his Master, when yet the Disciples knew it not, suspected *Iudas* as little as themselves; and *the end* of those also, in that fore-named place, is said to be *worse than their beginning*. Now because such sinne so highly against knowledge, therefore their punishment is made the *regula* of all other wicked mens; as when it is said, *that other sinners shall have their portion with Hypocrites*: as the wicked Angels punishment is made the measure of mens: *Goe ye cursed into the fire prepared for the Devill and his Angels*: so among men, such grosse Hypocrites, their punishment is made the rule, and so the chiefe of all kind of torments, which sinners of the sonnes of men shall undergoe.

Now let mee speake a word to all such as thus go on in a state of impenitencie against knowledge: this is a high kinde of sinning, and of all the most desperate, and doth argue more hardnesse of heart, and *despising the riches of Gods goodnesse*. For if, as in the *Rom.* 2. 4. to go on in sinne, when a man [*knowes not*,] that is, considers not that *Gods mercy leads him to repentance, is made the signe and effect of a very hard heart, treasuring up wrath*, then much more, when thou knowest and considerest thou art in an impenitent condition, and hast many motions leading thee to repentance, is thy heart then to be accounted hard? When a man commits a particular act against knowledge, he haply and usually still Application.

thinks his eſtate may be good, and that he ſhall not loſe God utterly, or hazard the loſſe of him; onely his ſpirit, being at preſent empty of communion with him, he ſteales out to ſome ſtolne pleaſure: but when a man knowes his eſtate bad, and that he is *without God in the world*, and yet goes on, he doth hereby caſt away the *Lord*, and profeſſeth he cares not for him, or that communion which is to be had by him, as *Eſau* did his birth-right.

David, though he deſpiſed the Lord, yet hee did not caſt away the Lord, as *Saul* did: for *Saul* ventured utterly to loſe him, knowing his eſtate naught. *David*, when hee ſinned, thought Gods eternall favour would ſtill continue, though for the preſent he might loſe the ſenſe of it. But when a man goes on in a ſtate of ſinning, he ventures the loſſe of Gods eternall love, and ſlights it, and knowes he doth ſo: when a man knowes that he is *condemned already*, as being impenitent, and that all his eternall eſtate lyes upon the non-payment of ſuch duties of repentance, &c. and that the guilt of all his ſinnes will come in upon him, and that an execution is out, and yet goes on, this is more than to commit one act againſt knowledge, whereby he thinks he brings upon himſelf but the guilt of that one ſinne; and upon the committing of which, he thinks not the morgage of all lyes, though it deſerves it; herein men ſhew themſelves more deſperate.

2. Head: *Rules whereby to eſtimate ſinnes againſt knowledge.*

In the next place, I come to thoſe *rules, whereby you may meaſure and eſtimate ſinning againſt knowledge*, in any particular act of ſinning; and they are either

either *before the ſinne*, or *in ſinning*: *three* of either, which I make a ſecond head, to explaine this doctrine by.

Of two ſorts: *Before* ſinning, or *in* ſinning.

1 Before ſinning, 3 rules.

1. The more a man conſiders the iſſues and conſequents of a ſinne.

First, *before*.

The firſt rule is, The more thou kneweſt, and didſt conſider the iſſues and conſequents of that ſinne thou didſt commit, the more thou ſinneſt againſt conſcience in it: when as in *Rom.* 1. *ult.* *Thou knowing* (ſayes the *Apoſtle*) *that thoſe that commit ſuch things, are worthy of death*: that is, thou conſidereſt that *Hell* and *Damnation* is the iſſue and deſert of it, and *yet committeſt it*; yea and this when haply hell fire at preſent flaſheth in thy face, and yet thou goeſt on to doe it, in this caſe men are ſaid *to chooſe death*, and *to love it*, *Prov.* 3. 36. When a man conſiders, *that the way* to the whorehouſe *are the wayes to death* (as *Solomon* ſpeaks) So when thou a profeſſor conſidereſt with thy ſelfe before, This ſinne will prove ſcandalous, and undoe me, diſable me for ſervice, caſt mee out of the hearts of good men, and yet doſt it. Thus that fooliſh King was told againe and againe, *Ier.* 38. 17, 18, 19. that if he would yeeld to the *King of Babel*, he ſhould ſave his life, and City, and Kingdome, and live there ſtill; but if hee would not, he ſhould not eſcape: but as *Ieremie* told him, *verſe* 23. *Thou ſhalt cauſe this City to be burnt with fire*, yet he would not hearken: *This is the word of the Lord* (ſayes *Ieremie*,) and he knew it to be ſo; and yet being a weake Prince, led by his Nobles, he would not follow his Counſell: and thus *Iudas* fully knew the iſſue: Chriſt had ſaid againe and againe, *Woe be to him by whom*

the Sonne of man is betrayed, and yet went on to doe it.

2. Rule, The more consultations and debates before.

The second rule is, the more consultations, debates, and motives against it, did runne through thee before thou didst it, so much the greater and more hainous. How often did mercy come in, and tell thee, that if thou lookest for any hope or part in it, thou shouldest not doe such an evill? how often came that in, *Shall I doe this, and sinne against God?* did any Scripture come in to testifie against thee in the nick? did God send in the remembrance of such a mercie past, to perswade thee; or some mercies to come, which thou dependest upon him for? That which made *Spira's* sinne so great, was such debates as these before: and this made *Darius* sinne, in casting *Daniel* into the Lions den, so great; he debated it with himselfe, *Dan.* 6.14. he was sore displeased with himselfe, and laboured to the going downe of the sunne to deliver him; he considered that he was as his right hand in all the affaires of his Kingdome, and a man entrapped meerely for his conscience, and that to put him to death was to sacrifice him to their malice; he knew him to be holy, and wise, worth all the men that sought after his life, and yet yeelded; these considerations troubled him afore, and also after; insomuch as he could not sleep for them, *ver.* 18. Now because that every such consultation should set an impression upon the heart, and countermand the motions of sin, when therefore thou dost it, maugre all such debates and motives to the contrary, this is much against knowledg, and very heynous. Therefore

fore the *Phariſes*, *Luke* 7. 30. are ſaid *to have reje-cted the counſell of God*, εἰς ἑαυτὸς, *in* or *againſt them-ſelves*: the words will beare either: *In themſelves*, becauſe they knew it, and tooke it into conſidera-tion, and yet rejected it: and *againſt themſelves*, be-cauſe it was their deſtruction.

The third rule is, that the more confirmations any man hath had of the knowledge of that which he ſinneth in, and teſtimonies againſt it, the grea-ter ſinne againſt knowledge it is: when a man hath had a cloud of witneſſes in his obſervation againſt a particular ſinne, and yet doth it, and goes on in it, it is the more fearfull. To goe on againſt that one witneſſe, the bare light and grudging of natu-rall conſcience onely, is not ſo much; but when it is further confirmed, and backed by the word written, which a man hath read, and with teſtimo-nies, out of which a man meets with ſuch places, wherein againe and againe in reading of it, ſuch a practice is condemned, and obſerves it; and then alſo heares it reproved in Sermons, and of all ſinnes elſe, heares in private conference that ſinne ſpoken againſt alſo; yea hath in his eye many examples of others ſinning in the like kinde, which have beene puniſhed, yea haply himſelfe alſo; yet to ſin againſt all theſe is exceeding hainous. Sometimes God orders things ſo, as a ſinne is made a great ſinne, by ſuch forewarnings; ſo he contrived circumſtances that *Iudas* ſinned a great ſinne; for *Iudas* knew be-fore that *Chriſt* was the Saviour of the world; he knew it by all the miracles he had ſeene, as alſo by his gracious words and converſe; and he profeſſed

3. Rule, The more teſtimo-nies and war-nings againſt a ſinne.

as

as much in following of him; and he had the written word againſt it, *Thou ſhalt not murder the innocent.* But yet further, God to aggravate his ſinne to the higheſt, orders it ſo, that *Chriſt* ſhould tell him of it when he was to goe about it, pronounceth a woe to him, *Iohn* 22.22. that *it had beene good for that man that he had never beene borne. Mar.* 14.21. and the Diſciples they were ſorrowfull at *Chriſts* ſpeech, when hee ſuſpected one of them; and ſhewed an abomination and deteſtation of ſuch a fact, there was a Jurie of eleven men, yea witneſſes againſt it; yea and *Iudas* againſt himſelfe, he asked *if it were he*; yea and *Chriſt* gave him a ſop, and told him, *thou haſt ſaid it*, and *doe what thou doeſt quickly*: which even then might argue to his conſcience, that he was God, and ſearched and knew his heart, and yet hee went out and did it immediately. How did hee ſinne againſt the haire, as wee ſpeak, and how did all theſe circumſtances aggravate his ſin?

But yet a more cleare evidence of this is that inſtance of *Pilate*, whom God many wayes would have ſtopt in his ſinne of condemning *Chriſt*, who examining him before the *Phariſes*, he could finde no fault with him, as concerning thoſe things whereof they accuſed him, *Luke* 23.14. and yet to allay their malice, unjuſtly ſcourged him, *verſe* 16. And further, when he ſent him to *Herod*, as being willing to rid his owne hands of him, *Herod* alſo found nothing worthy of death in him, *verſe* 15. which was another witneſſe might have confirmed him concerning Chriſts innocencie. Yea yet further,

ther, that the fact might be more aggravated, a moſt notorious murtherers life muſt be put into the ſcale with *Chriſts*, and either the one or the other condemned: and when the people yet choſe *Barrabas*, why (ſayes *Pilate*) what evill hath he done? *ver.* 22. then he diſtinctly knew and conſidered, that he was delivered up through envie: Yea and when hee was upon the bench, and ready to pronounce ſentence, as it were, God admoniſht him by his owne wife, *Mat.* 27. 19. whom God himſelfe had admoniſhed in a dreame, ſhe ſending him word ſhee had ſuffered *many things by reaſon of him that night, and therefore have nothing* (ſayes ſhee) *to doe with that juſt man:* yea he himſelfe, when he condemns him, waſheth his hands. And thus it falls out in many ſinfull buſineſſes which men are about, that God often and many ſeverall wayes would knock them off, and ſtops them in their way, as hee did *Balaam*; reproves them, as he did him by a dumbe Aſſe, 2 *Pet.* 2. 16. ſo there by ſome ſilent paſſage of providence, and not onely ſo, but by his Spirit alſo ſtanding in their way, with the threatnings ready drawne and brandiſht againſt them, as the *Angell* did with a drawne ſword againſt *Balaam*, and yet they goe on; this is fearfull.

1. Rules to meaſure the ſinfulneſſe of ſuch acts *in* ſinning, 3.

There are 3. Rules alſo, whereby the ſinfulneſſe of ſin, as it is againſt knowledge, may be meaſured, from what may be obſerved IN the act: as

1

First, the leſſe paſſion, or inward violence or temptation to a ſinne committed againſt knowledg, the greater ſinne againſt knowledge it is argued to be: For then the knowledge is the clearer, paſſion

The leſſe paſſion or temptation to a ſin againſt knowledge.

or temptation being as a miſt. But then to ſinne, when a man is not in paſſion, is to ſtumble at noon-day. For as drunkenneſſe takes away reaſon, ſo doth paſſion (which is a ſhort drunkenneſſe) cloud and miſt a mans knowledge. And ſo *Ariſtotle* compares the knowledge of an *incontinent* perſon, to the knowledge of one that is drunk. When *Peter* denied his Maſter, though hee had warning of it before, and ſo it was againſt knowledge, and it was by lying, and ſwearing, and forſwearing, which are ſinnes of all other moſt directly againſt knowledge, yet he was taken unexpectedly; and when that which might ſtir up feare to the utmoſt in him, was in his view; for hee was then in the Judgement Hall, where his Maſter, juſt before his face, was arraigned for his life; and he thought he might alſo have preſently been brought to the barre with him, if he had beene diſcovered to have been his Diſciple; ſo as his paſſion being up, his ſoule was diſtempered, reaſon had little time to recover it ſelfe; and therefore though it was againſt knowledge, yet the leſſe againſt knowledge, becauſe knowledge had *leſam operationem*, it had not its perfect worke upon his heart: but now *Iudas*, in betraying his Maſter, had not onely warning before, but was not tempted to it, but went of *himſelfe*, and made the offer to the *Phariſees*, ſought how *conveniently* to doe it, plotted to doe it, had his wits about him, had time to think of it, and therefore it was (beſides the hainouſneſſe of the act) more alſo againſt knowledge, and ſo the greater. So *David* when he went to ſlay *Nabal*, was in hot blood,

blood, in a paſſion; but when hee plotted to kill *Vriah*, he was in cold blood: he was drunke when he lay with *Bathſheba*, but ſober when hee made *Vriah* drunke: hee went quietly and ſedately on in it. And therefore we find *David* blamed onely in the matter of *Vriah*, not ſo much for that of *Bathſheba*.

Secondly, the more ſorrow, *reniſus*, or reluctancie, and regreeting of mind there is againſt a ſinne, 'tis a ſign that the knowledge of it is the ſtronger, and quicker againſt it, and ſo the ſinne the more againſt knowledge: for that gaine-ſaying and diſpleaſure of the minde againſt it, ariſeth from the ſtrength and violent beating of the pulſe of *conſcience*, and oppoſition of it againſt the ſinne, it ſprings from the greater and deeper apprehenſion of the evill of the ſinne in the action, which is then in doing; and though that reluctancie be a better ſigne of the eſtate of the perſon, than if there were none at all; as there is not in thoſe who *are paſt feeling, & commit ſin with greedineſſe*; whoſe eſtate is therefore worſe, and more uncapable of repentance, yet the fact it ſelf is argued to be the more hainous, for it argues it to be againſt ſtrong, active, ſtirring knowledge. This argued *Herods* ſinne to be much againſt knowledge (as indeed it was) *Mark 6.26.* the text ſayes, *he was exceeding ſorrowfull:* now that he could not have beene, unleſſe he had exceedingly apprehended what a great ſinne it was to behead *Iohn*, who, *he knew, was a juſt and an holy man, ver.* 20. and who was one that had a great place in his eſtimation, *for he obſerved him*, and was

The more inward regreet, and ſorrow, and reluctancy, the ſtronger is the knowledge, and ſo more againſt it.

wrought much upon by his ministerie, and he knew that he did but sacrifice him to the malice of a wicked woman; and in this case the sinne is also hereby made so much the greater, in that *Conscience* doth stir up a contrary violent passion in the heart against the temptation, and therefore yet to doe it, when there is such a bank cast up that might resist it, yet then to break all downe, such a sin wasts the conscience much.

3 The more hardnesse of heart in committing a sinne knowne to be a sin, the greater the sin, as it is a sin against knowledge.

Thirdly, on the contrary, the more hardnesse of heart there is, and want of tendernesse, in committing that sinne, which a man knowes to be a sinne, it is argued thereby to be the greater sinne against knowledge; not onely *the greater sinne*, but *the greater sinne against knowledge*. For hardnesse of heart in sinning, is an effect of having formerly sinned much against knowledge before. For as the light of the Sun hardneth clay, so the beames of knowledge and conscience, lighting upon mens hearts, use to harden them, and doe make them in the end *past feeling*. And therefore in 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. sinning against knowledge is made the cause of a seared conscience, *they speak lyes in Hypocrisie*: and therefore knowingly that they are lyes, and such lyes as damne others as well as themselves, which who beleeve are damned, 2 *Thes.* 2. 11, 12. and if so, no wonder if it followes, *having their Consciences seared with an hot iron.* It is not a *cold iron* will seare their consciences, and make them insensible, but an *hot iron, a burning and a shining light*, which once having had place in their consciences, and being rejected, they begin to be hard-

ned.

ned and seared. For knowledge makes sinnes and the apprehensions of them, familiar to a man, and so lesse terrible and frightfull in the end, as Beares and Lyons doe become to their keepers, through custome. *Iudas* had a hard heart, when he came to betray his Master, surely his conscience had smitten him at first more for nimming out of the bag, than it did now for this of murder. He could never have had such a hard heart, had he not had much knowledge: was it not a hard heart, that when he was challenged to his face, hee could set a brazen face on it, and did aske as well as the rest, *Is it I?* when also Christ cursed him to his face, who should doe it, and the Disciples all abhorr'd it: had not *Iudas* lived under such blessed and glorious meanes, and sinned long against knowledge, all this would have startled him, and have staggered in his purpose: but he goes on as if it were nothing, though when he had done it, his conscience was then opened too late; when a man formerly hath beene troubled with a small sinne, more than now with a grosse lye, which he can digest better than once the other: or, when before, if he omitted praying, it troubled him, now he can goe a weeke without, and is not sensible of it, it is a signe that his knowledge hath hardned him.

Thus having given such rules, whereby you may estimate the sinfulnesse of particular acts, I will now proceed to other wayes, aggravations taken from the kind of knowledge a man sins against, to sin against what kind of knowledge is most hainous and dangerous; and these are *five*, drawn from the

3. Head. Aggravations drawne from the *kinde* of that knowledge we sinne against, which are five.

The more strong the knowledge, the greater the sin.

severall qualifications of that knowledge, and the light which men sinne against. For the greater, or the more strong & efficacious the light and knowledge is, the greater is the sinne of knowledge thou committest; and this I make a *third* generall head to explaine this doctrine by. All these five rules being applicable and common both to particular acts against knowledge, and also lying in an estate of impenitencie against knowledge, and all other particulars which have beene mentioned.

1 To sin against the inbred light of nature.

First then, to sinne against the inbred light of nature, that is, in such sinnes, as though thou hadst wanted the light of the word in, thou wouldst have knowne to be such: This is a high kind of sinning. Such the Apostle speaks of, *Iude* 10. *What things they know naturally, in these they corrupt themselves, as brute beasts,* putting as it were no difference of actions, no more than beasts, no not in what nature teacheth them, and therefore therein are as beasts: for it is the light of nature puts the first difference betweene men and beasts; and in such kinde of sinnes the *Apostle* instanceth in this first *Chapter*, as namely, that of *unnaturall uncleanesse*, in three particulars: as 1. *self-uncleannesse, ver.* 24. ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, that is, alone *by themselves*: so *Beza* and *Theophilact* understand it, which he makes there the first degree of unnaturall uncleanesse, which is therefore unnaturall, because thou destroyest that which nature gave thee for propagation, *quod perdis homo est.* Then 2. the uncleane love of boyes, *men burning in lust with men, ver.* 27. be it discovered in what dalliance it will, though not arising to an act of Sodomie,

mie, *doing that which is unseemely*, *ver.* 27. which hee therefore sayes, is the *perverting the use* and intent *of nature*, and so is a sin against nature, *leaving the naturall use of women. My brethren, I am ashamed to speak of such things as are done in secret.* These kind of sinnes, by the Apostles ranking them, are in a further degree of unnaturalnesse, than any other, because they are made the punishments of other sinnes, which yet were against the light of nature also: namely, not *glorifying God* when they knew him: yet that being a sinne, the light of nature was not so clear in comparison of these, therefore these are made the punishments of the other, as being more against nature. So for men to be disobedient to Parents, stubborne to them, and *without naturall affection*, as the Apostle sayes, *ver.* 30,31. this is against nature, even the instinct of it. So unthankfulnesse, and requiting evill for good, is against a common principle in mens mindes. *Doe not the Gentiles doe good to those that do good to them?* your hearts use to rise against such an one out of common humanity; or if you see one cruell and unmercifull, which is another reckoned up, *ver.* 31. there being usually principles of pitty in all mens natures, by nature; therefore for one man to prey upon, and tyrannize over another, as fishes doe over the small ones, as *Habakkuk* complaineth, this is against nature; which teacheth *you to doe as you would be done to.* So *covenant-breakers*, and lying, and forswearing, mentioned *ver.* 30. *inventers of evill*, and *truce-breakers*, are sins against nature, and naturall light; lying is against a double light, both

Hab. 1. 14.

both morall; both *juris*, which tels us such a thing ought not to be done; and *facti*, whilest we affirm a thing that is not, the knowledge of the contrary ariseth up in us against it, though there were no law forbade it; therefore of all sins else, the Devills lusts are expressed by two; *lying*, which is a sinne in the understanding, and *malice* in the will, *John* 8.44.

2 To sin against the light of education.

Secondly, to sin against that light which thou didst suck in, when thou wert young, to sin against the *light of thy education*, this is an aggravation, and a great one. There is a *Catechisme* of a blessed mother *Bathsheba*, which shee taught *Solomon* when a child, put in among the records of sacred Writ, *Prov.* 31. wherein she counsels him betimes, *not to give his strength to women*; she foretold him of that sinne: and because it is incident to Kings most, they having all pleasures at command, she tells him particularly, *it destroyes Kings*: and so also *not to drink wine*, was another instruction there he was forewarned of: this aggravated *Solomons* fault the more; for reade the 2. Chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, and we shall finde there, that hee was most guilty in the inordinate love of these two; but hee had not beene brought up so, his good mother had not thus instructed him. And thus also when God would aggravate his owne peoples sin unto them, he recalls them to their education in their youth in the wilderneſſe. So *Ierem.* 2. 2. *Goe and cry to them, I remember the kindnesse and* towardlinesse *of thy youth*: he puts them in mind of their education by *Moses* their *Tutor*, and their forwardnesse then. And so

Hos.

Hoſ. 12. *when he was a child, I loved him*; and then God had *their firſt fruits*, *ver.* 3. this he brings to aggravate their *back-ſliding*, *ver.* 5. Therefore the Apoſtle urgeth it as a ſtrong argument to *Timothie*, to goe on to perſevere in grace and goodneſſe, *That he had knowne the Scriptures from a child:* and therefore for him to fall, would be more hainous. The reaſon is, becauſe the light then infuſed, it is the firſt, a *virgin* light, as I may call it, which God in much mercy vouchſafed to pre-poſſeſſe the minde with, before it ſhould be deflowred and defiled with corrupt principles from the world; and did put it there to keep the mind chaſte and pure: and this alſo then, when the minde was moſt ſoft and tender, and ſo fitter to receive the deeper impreſſion from it. And hence ordinarily the light ſucke in then, ſeaſons men ever after, whether it be for good, or for evill; it fore-ſtalls, and pre-judgeth a man againſt other principles: and though a man comes to have more acquired knowledge and reaſons after put into him when he is come to perfect age, yet the ſmall light of his education, if it were to the contrary, doth bias him, and keeps him fixt, and bent that way. So we ſee it is in opinions about Religion: the light then entertained, can never be diſputed out: ſo in mens wayes and actions, *Traine up a child in his way, and he will not depart from it. Prov.* 22. 6. To ſin therefore againſt it, and to put out the beames of it, or defile it, and to weare out the impreſſions of it, how wicked is it, and what a wretch art thou to do ſo?

Many of you young ſchollers have had a good

Bathsheba that instructed you, not to poure out your strength to drinke or women, but to pray privately, and to feare God, and love him; and when you come hither, you have good *Tutors* also, who teach you to pray; Ministers, who instill blessed truths into you, from which, one would think, you should never depart; yet you doe.

Think how grievous this is; for if it is made an excuse for many a man in sinning, that it answers but his education; that he never knew or saw better, as you say of many Papists; then must it needs on the contrary, be an aggravation of sinfulnesse. And as it was *Timothies* commendation, *that hee knew the Scriptures from a child*, so it will be thy condemnation, that thou knewest better from a child, and yet rebellest against thy light.

3 The more reall and experimentall light men sin against.

Thirdly, the more *reall* and *experimentall* the light is, men sinne against, still the more sinne; as when they have learnt it from examples of godly men, whom they have lived amongst, or the observations of Gods dealings with themselves or others, and not onely from the word notionally. To sinne against such light, this addes a further degree; not onely to sinne against the bare light of nature, but also further, when nature hath besides lighted her torch at the *Scripture*, and then when beyond all this, the reall examples and observations made of Gods dealings with a mans selfe and others, shall confirme all this, this makes a mans sinfulnesse much more grievous; for as *exempla efficacius docent quàm præcepta*, so the knowledge got by experiments of mercies or judgements, is of more

more force and evidence. Knowledge learnt by experience, is the most efficacious. Therfore Christ himselfe, who knew all things already, yet *learnt* (in the schoole of experience) *by what he suffered*. A little of some knowledge distill'd out of a mans owne observation, is most precious, every drop of it; therefore the Apostle urgeth it on *Timothie*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 14. *Continue in the things thou hast learned, and beene assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.* There is a two-fold motive, and both emphaticall; First, he was *assured* in himselfe; and secondly, that which strengthned that assurance, and was a meanes to worke it, was the example of the holy Apostle, and of his owne Parents, *Knowing of whom thou hast learned it*: And so *ver.* 10. the Apostle againe urgeth his owne example, *Thou hast fully knowne my doctrine and manner of life*; and then also brings to his mind the education of those his godly Parents, who instructed him. Hence also, *Esay* 26. 10. it is made an aggravation, that *in the land of uprightnesse men deale unjustly*. Thus light drawn from the observation of Gods judgements upon others, it much aggravates: it is laid to *Belshazzars* charge, *Dan.* 5. 22. *Thou knewest all this, how God dealt with thy father Nebuchadonezer.* So some of you come here, and live in a religious society, and see sometimes one, sometimes another of thy Colleagues turn to Christ, yea haply chamber fellow converted from his evill courses, and yet thou goest on, this is sinning against a great light.

4. The more shining the lighe is in the conscience joyned with a taste, the greater the sin.

Fourthly, the more vigorous, strong, powerfull

the light is that is in thee, and more *ſtirring* in thy heart, and joyned with a taſte, the greater the ſins committed againſt it are to be accounted. The more thou haſt taſted the bitterneſſe of ſinne, and Gods wrath, and haſt beene ſtung with it as with a *Cockatrice*, the more thou haſt taſted Gods goodneſſe in prayer, and in the ordinances, the more of ſuch a knowledge, and yet ſinneſt the worſe. In the 5. of *Iohn*, 35. *Chriſt* aggravates the *Iewes* unbeleefe in himſelfe, and their preſent hardneſſe, that *Iohn* was to them, not only a *ſhining*, but alſo a *burning light*; that is, they had ſuch knowledge engendred by his miniſtery, as wrought joy and heat, as well as light; therefore it is added, *they rejoyced therein for a ſeaſon*. And thus their fall, *Heb.6.* is aggravated, that it was ſuch a light as had taſting with it. For to explaine this, you muſt know, that between *ordinary notionall light*, or that aſſenting to ſpirituall truths which is common with men, from traditionall knowledge living in the Church, that between it and true ſaving light, or *the light of life*, there is a middle kind of light, which is more than the common conviction men have, and leſſe than ſaving light: it is a light which leaves alſo ſome impreſſion on the affections, makes them feele the *powers of heaven and hell*, and be affected with them. Now the more of ſuch light againſt a ſinne, be it drunkenneſſe, or uncleanneſſe, or oppreſſion, and yet falleſt to it againe, the worſe. For this is a further degree added to knowledg, and not common to all wicked men. And therefore as thoſe *Iewes*, who had not onely common meanes of knowledge,

but

but *miracles* alſo, and yet *beleeved not*, *Iohn* 12.17. ſhall be more condemned; ſo thoſe who have ſuch taſting knowledg ſet on by the holy Ghoſt (which is as much as if a miracle were wrought, for it is above nature, a *ſupernaturall* worke of the *Spirit*.) And therefore to ſinne againſt ſuch light, and ſuch onely, is that which makes a man in the next degree of fitneſſe to ſin againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*.

5 To ſin againſt profeſſed knowledge.

Fiftly, to ſin againſt profeſſed knowledge, is an aggravation alſo, and an heavy one. To ſin againſt a mans owne principles which he teacheth others, or reproves or cenſureth in others. *Titus* 1. laſt, *Thoſe thvt profeſſe they know God, and yet deny him*, theſe are *moſt abominable* of all others: For theſe are lyars, and ſo ſinne againſt knowledge as lyars doe, in the 1 *Iohn* 2.4. ſuch an one is called a *lyar* in a double reſpect, both in that he ſayes hee hath that knowledge he hath not, it not being true; and becauſe alſo he denyes that in deed, which he affirmes in word, this is ſcandalous ſinning. So *Rom.* 2.24. the *Iewes boaſting of the law*, and of *having the forme of knowledge* in their braines, cauſed the *Gentiles to blaſpheme*, when they ſaw they lived cleane contrary thereunto: and therefore a brother that walkes inordinately, was to be delivered to *Satan, to learne what it was to blaſpheme*, 1 *Tim.* 2.20. That is, to learne to know how evill and bitter a thing it is, by the torments of an evill conſcience, to live in ſuch a courſe, as made God and his wayes evill ſpoken of, as it befell *David* when he thus ſinned. Yea 2 *Cor.* 5.10, 11. though they might keep company with a heathen, becauſe hee was ignorant,

and professed not the knowledge of God; *yet if a brother*, one that professed, and so was to walke by the same rules, did sinne against those principles he professed, then *keepe him not company*: Thus did *Saul* sinne. All the Religion he had and pretended to in his latter dayes, was *persecuting witches*: yet in the end he went against this his principle; hee went to a witch in his great extremitie at last. And thus God will deale with all that are hollow, and sinne secretly against knowledge in the end. Hee suffers them to goe against their most professed principles.

These are aggravations in generall, applicable both to any act of sinning, or going on in a known state of sinning.

USE.

USE.

NOw the uſe of all that hath been ſpoken, what is it, but to move all thoſe that have knowledge, to take heed, more heed of ſinning than other men? and thoſe of them that remaine in their naturall eſtate, to turne ſpeedily and effectually unto God? For if ſinning againſt knowledge be ſo great an aggravation of ſinning, then of all engagements to repentance, knowledge is the greateſt.

How great an engagement & motive it is to men of knowledge to turne to God, and to take heed of ſinning.

1 Such an one cannot ſin ſo cheap as others: their ſins are more coſtly and chargeable,

Firſt, thou who haſt knowledge, canſt not ſin ſo cheap as another, who is ignorant: Therefore if thou wilt be wicked, thy wickedneſſe will coſt thee ten times more than it would another. Places of much knowledge, and plentifull in the meanes of grace, are dear places to live in ſin in. To be drunk, and uncleane, after enlightning, and the motions of the Spirit, and powerfull Sermons, is more than twentie times afore; thou mighteſt have committed ten to one, and beene damned leſſe. This is condemnation (ſayes Chriſt) *that light came into the world.* Neither canſt thou haue ſo much pleaſure in thy ſin as an ignorant perſon; For the conſcience puts forth a ſting in the act, when thou haſt knowledge, and does ſubject thee to bondage and the fear of death. When a man knows how dearely he muſt pay for it, there is an expectation of judgement embittereth all. Therefore the *Gentiles* ſinned

and will have leſſe pleaſure in ſinning.

ned with more pleaſure than we. Therefore *Eph.*4. 18, 19. the *Apoſtle* ſpeaking of them, ſayes, that through *their ignorance*, and darkneſſe, and *want of feeling*, they committed ſin *with greedineſſe*, and ſo with more pleaſure; they not having knowledge or hearts ſenſible of the evils that attend upon their courſes.

2 Such are given up to greater hardneſſe of heart.

Secondly, thou wilt in ſinning againſt knowledg be given up to greater *hardneſſe*. *If the light that is in thee be darkneſſe* (ſayes Chriſt) *how great is that darkneſſe?* therefore the more light a man hath, and yet goes on in works of darkneſſe, the more darkneſſe that man will be left unto, even to a reprobate mind in the end.

3 Such God gives up to the worſt and groſſeſt of ſins.

Thirdly, it will procure thee to be given up to the worſt of ſins, more than another man; for God when he leaves men, makes one ſin the puniſhment of another, & reſerves the worſt for ſinners againſt knowledge. Theſe *Gentiles*, when *they knew God, they worſhipped him not*, *God gave them up to the worſt of ſinnes*, whereof they were capable, as *unnaturall uncleanneſſe*, *&c.* But theſe are not ſinnes great enough for thee, that art a ſinner of the Chriſtians; to be given up to drunkenneſſe, or adultery, &c. otherwiſe than to diſcover thy rottenneſſe, theſe are too ſmall ſins; but thou ſhalt be given up to *inward profaneneſſe of heart*, (as *Eſau* was, having been brought up in a good family) ſo as not to *neglect* holy duties onely, but to *deſpiſe* them; to deſpiſe the good word of God and his Saints, and to hate godlineſſe and the appearance of it; thou ſhalt be given up to contemne God and his

his judgements, to *trample under foot the blood of the covenant*, or elſe unto deviliſh opinions; thoſe other are too ſmall to be puniſhments of thy ſinne: For ſtil the end of ſuch an one muſt be *ſeven times worſe than the beginning*, as *Chriſt* ſayes it ſhall; if thou wert a drunkard, a ſwearer, or an uncleane perſon before, and thy knowledge wrought ſome alteration in thee, thou ſhalt not haplybe ſo now at thy fal, but ſeven times worſe; profane, injurious to Saints, a blaſphemer, or derider of Gods wayes and ordinances.

4. At death, knowledg ſinned againſt, gives up to more horror and deſpaire.

Fourthly, when thou commeſt to lay hold on mercy at death, thy knowledge will give thee up to more deſpaire, than another man. Knowledge, though when it is but newly revealed, it is an help; yet not made uſe of, turns againſt the ſoul, to wound it, and to work deſpaire; and this both becauſe we have ſinned againſt the meanes that ſhould have ſaved us, as alſo becauſe ſuch as ſinne againſt knowledge, ſin with more preſumption; and the more preſumption in thy life, the more deſpaire thou art apt to fall into at death. Therefore *Eſay* 59.11,12. what brought ſuch trouble, and *roarings like Beares* upon theſe Jewes? and that when ſalvation was looked for, that yet it was ſo far off from them, in their apprehenſions? *our iniquities* (ſay they) *teſtifie to our face, and we know them*. Now then ſins teſtifie to our face, when our conſcience tooke notice of them, even to our faces, when we were committing them; and then alſo the ſame ſins themſelves will againe teſtifie to our faces, when we have recourſe for the pardon of them. Therefore thou wilt

lye rowling on thy death bed, and that thou *knowest them*, will come as an argument, that thou shalt not have mercie. As ignorance is a plea for mercie, *I did it ignorantly, therefore I obtained mercie*; so *I did it knowingly*, will come in as a bar and a plea against thee, therefore I shall not have mercie

5 In Hell it increaseth torment.

Fifthly, both here and in *Hell*, it is the greatest executioner and tormenter. In this sense it may be said, *Qui auget scientiam, auget dolorem*: He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow, as *Solomon* speaks: for knowledge enlargeth our apprehension of our guilt, and that brings more feare and torment. *Have they no knowledge, who eate up my people? Yes, there is their feare* (sayes *David*.) Therefore *Heb.* 10. 28. after sinning after knowledge, there *remaines not* onely a more *fearfull punishment*, but a more *fearfull expectation* in the parties consciences. And this is the *worme in hell*, that gnawes for ever. Light breeds these wormes.

But then you will say, it is best for us to be ignorant, and to keep our selves so.

I answer, no: For to *refuse knowledge* will damn as much as abusing it. This you may see in *Prov.* 1. 23. *Ye fooles* (sayes wisedome) *you that hate knowledge, Turne, and I will poure my spirit upon you, and make known my words to you.* Well, ver. 24. *they refused*, and would none of his reproof. Therefore sayes God, *I will laugh at your calamitie*: that is, I will have no pitty, but instead of pitty, God will laugh at you; *and when your feare comes, I will not answer, because ye hated knowledge*, ver. 29. so as this is as bad. There remaines therefore no middle way of refuge,

ſuge, to extricate thy ſelfe at, and avoid all this, no remedy but turning unto God: otherwiſe thou canſt not but be more miſerable than other men; yea and this muſt be done ſpeedily alſo: For thou having knowledge, God is quicker in denying thee grace, and in giving thee up to a reprobate mind, than another man, who is ignorant. He will wait upon another that knows not his wil & waies, twenty, thirty, forty yeares, as he did upon the children of the *Iſraelites* that were borne in the wilderneſſe, and had not ſeene his wonders in *Egypt*, and at the red ſea: but thoſe that had, he ſoone ſware againſt many of them, *that they ſhould never enter into his reſt*. *Chriſt* comes as a *ſwift witneſſe* againſt thoſe to whom the *Goſpell* is preached, *Mal.* 3. 5. he makes quick diſpatch of the treaty of grace with them. Therefore few that have knowledge are converted when they are old, or that lived long under the meanes. And therefore you that have knowledge, are engaged to repent, and to turn to God, and to bring your hearts to your knowledge, and that ſpeedily alſo, or elſe your damnation will not only be more intolerable than others, but the *ſentence* of it paſſe out more quickly againſt you. Therefore as Chriſt ſayes, *Ioh.* 12. 36. *Whilſt you have the light, walk in it:* For that day of *Grace*, which is very clear and bright, is uſually a *ſhort one*. And though men may live many naturall dayes after, and enjoy the common light of the ſunne, yet the day of grace, and of gracious excitements to repent, may be but a ſhort one.

FINIS.

UMI

AGGRAVATION OF SINNING AGAINST MERCIE:

By exaggerating the *Riches* of common *Mercies* men sinne against.

BY

THO: GOODWIN B. D.

LONDON,
Printed by *M. F.* for *R. Dawlman*, at the brazen Serpent in *Pauls* Church-yard.
MDCXXXVII.

The Table.

The firſt generall Head.

What goodneſſe, or bounty, patience, and long ſuffering are in God. page 3.

Bounty in God deſcribed. ibid.

1. *He muſt be a giver.* 4
2. *What he gives muſt be his owne.* ibid.
3. *He muſt give largely.* 5
4. *He muſt give all he gives freely.* 6
5. *He looks for no recompence for time to come.* 7

Patience is a further thing than mercy. 8

1. *Though we injure God, and he be ſenſible of it, yet he is patient.* ibid.
2. *He vouchſafeth that time he forbeares them in to repent.* 9
3. *He waits that men would come in and repent.* ib.

Laſtly, Long ſuffering is but patience lengthned out farther. ibid.

The ſecond generall Head.

Riches of this goodneſſe ſpent on us. 10

1. *They are riches in themſelves.* ibid.
2. *All the world ſpend on theſe riches.* 11
3. *The time he hath forborne men.* 12
4. *The expenſive prodigality of ſinners in all ages.* ibid.

Patience is precious. 13

1. *In regard of what thoſe manifeſtations of his good-*

goodnesse cost. 13
2. *In regard of the usefulnesse.* 14

The third generall Head.

All this patience is used as meanes to bring men to repentance. 16
1. *All this goodnesse witnesseth a gracious hand in all these.* ib.
2. *Our owne conscience heart witnesse of offending a good God.* 17
3. *A common principle will witnesse against us when we returne evill for good.* ibid.
An Vse of expostulation with sinfull and impenitent men, and considerations drawn from. 18
1. *Their creation out of nothing.* 19
2. *Their being made men.* 20
3. *Having all the members of a man.* 21
4. *Preparing the world for them.* 22
5. *Suffering them to live a long time in it.* 23
6. *Giving them space to repent in.* 25
7. *Living upon his cost and charges.* 28
8. *Filling up their yeers and time with goodnes.* 31
As riches, credit, friends, comfort in them all.

AGGRA-

AGGRAVATIONS OF SINNING AGAINST MERCIE.

ROM. 2. 4, 5.

Or despisest thou the riches of his goodnesse, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance?

But after thy hardnesse and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy selfe wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God?

THis is the last & most weighty aggravation which the Apostle puts into the measure of the Gentiles sinfulnesse (which in the former Chapter he had, *verse* 29. pronounced *full* before) to make it fuller yet: *Their sinning against mercies,*

and deſpiſing the riches of Gods goodneſſe, patience, and forbearance, the hatefull evill and iniquity whereof, can be better no way ſet off and illuſtrated unto mens conſciences, than by a diſplay of the riches of that goodneſſe which men ſinne againſt. My purpoſe therefore is to unlock and carry you into that more common treaſury of outward mercies, and leade you through the ſeverall roomes thereof, all which doe continually *leade* you *unto repentance:* That then reflecting upon our ungratefull waſte, and abuſe of ſo many mercies in ſinning, thereby our ſins, every ſinne, the leaſt, may yet appeare more ſinfull unto us, *who are leſſe than the leaſt of all thoſe mercies.* Know then, that beſides that
Epheſ.2.7. peculiar treaſure of *unſearchable riches of grace laid up in Chriſt* (the offer of which neglected and deſpiſed, addes yet to all that ſinfulneſſe, a guilt as farre exceeding all that which ſhall be ſpoken of, as Heaven exceeds the Earth) There is another untold Mine of *Riches the Earth is full*
Pſal.104.24. *of*, as the *Pſalmiſt* tells us, and the Apoſtle here, which theſe Gentiles onely heard of, and which we partake of all as much as they. As there are *riches of grace* offered to you which can never be exhauſted; ſo there are *riches of patience* ſpent upon you, which you will have ſpent out in the end; the expence of which, caſt up, will alone amount to an immenſe treaſure, both of guilt in you, and of wrath in God, as theſe words informe us.

To

To helpe you in this account, I will

1. In generall, ſhew what *Goodneſſe*, or Bounty, *Patience*, and *long ſuffering* are in God.

2. That there are *riches* of theſe ſpent upon all the ſons of men.

3. That theſe all *leade men to repentance*. And then

4. I will expoſtulate with you, and aggravate your ſinfulneſſe, in going on to *deſpiſe* all theſe by unrepentance, as the Apoſtle here doth.

Firſt, in that God is ſaid here to be *Good*, or Bountifull: 2. Patient, or *forbearing*: 3. *Long-ſuffering*, they ſeeme to note out three degrees of his common mercies unto men.

Firſt, he is a *good*, or a *bountifull* God: for ſo, as goodneſſe is here uſed, I exegetically expound it: For though it be true, that *goodneſſe* and *bounty* may differ; yet when *riches of goodneſſe* are ſaid to be communicated, it imports the ſame, and is all one with *Bounty*; And ſuch is God. And all thoſe noble and royall qualifications and properties which concurre to make one truely *good*, and *bountifull*, doe meet and abound in him, in all thoſe good things which he doth beſtow; and are found truly in none but in him: ſo that it may be truly ſaid, that *there is none good but God*, as Chriſt ſayes of him.

Now *Bounty*, in the generall, which is in God, may be thus deſcribed:

It is a free, willing, and a large giving of what is meerly his own, looking for no recompenſe againe.

To explaine this, that you may see, that all these conditions are required to true goodnesse, and all of them to be found in God onely.

1. He that is *Bountifull*, he must be a *Giver*, and Bestower of *good* things: and all he bestows, it must be by way of *gift*, not by way of *recompence* unto, or by desert from the party hee bestowes all on: Therefore Christ sayes, *Luke 6. 33.* that *to doe good to those who* have done, or *doe good to us, is not thank-worthy*, nor is it *Bounty*. But God is therefore truely *good*, becaus hee simply, meerely, and absolutely *gives* away all which he bestowes: For hee was not, nor can any way become beholden to any of his creatures; nor had formerly received any thing from them, which might move him hereunto; so *Rom. 11.35. Who hath first given him, that hee may recompence him againe?* Nay untill He gave us a being, we were not capable of so much as receiving any good thing from him.

Luke 6. 33.

Rom. 11.35.

2. He who is truly termed *Good*, or *Bountifull*, all that he gives away must be his *owne*; And so all which *God* bestowes, it is his *owne*. So *Psal. 24.1. The Earth is the Lords*. The ground wee tread on, the place wee dwell in; Hee is our Landlord. But is that all? for the house may be the Landlords, when the furniture is the Tenants: therefore he further addes, *And the fulnesse of it is his* also: that is, all the things that fill the world, all the furniture, and provision of it both; all the *moveables*. (So *Psal. 50. 11, 12.*) *The cattell and*

Psal. 24.1.

Psal. 50. 11, 12.

the

the fowles upon a thouſand hills are mine, ſayes hee; and alſo all the *ſtanding* goods, *the corne and oile* (which you ſet and plant) *are mine*, *Hoſ.2.9.* yea and the Pſalmiſt in the ſame 24. Pſalme, adds further, that *they who dwell therein are his* alſo: not the houſe and furniture onely, but the Inhabitants themſelves. And this, by the moſt ſure, and moſt ſoveraigne title that can be, better than that of purchaſe, or inheritance, of and from another: for he hath *made* them; *All is thine, becauſe all comes of thee*, ſayes the ſame *David*, 1 Chron.29. *1 Chron.29.11,12.* And *all things are* not onely [*of him*] but [*through him*] *Rom.11.36.* that is, they cannot ſtand nor ſubſiſt without him. Even Kings, (the greateſt and moſt bountifull of men) their bounty is but as that of the clouds, which though they ſhowre down plentifully, yet they firſt received all from the Earth below them.

3. He muſt give *largely*, it is not Bounty elſe. Now *God* is therefore ſaid to be *rich in goodneſſe*, becauſe he is *abundant* in it. So we finde it, comparing *Pſal.33.5.* with *Pſal.104.24.* in which it is ſaid, that *the earth is full of his goodneſſe*, and *his riches*; which we may judge of, by what he ſayes in the 27. verſe of that 104. Pſalme, of what an houſe he keepes, and what multitudes he feeds: *All theſe* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *wait on thee, that thou mayeſt give them meat, and thou openeſt thy hand, and they are filled with good.* King *Ahaſuerus*, to ſhew his bounty, made a Feaſt to his chiefe Subjects, but it was but for halfe a yeare,

and not to all: ſome few halfe yeeres more would well nigh have beggard him; but God doth thus continually. The greateſt and moſt bountifull of men, when they would expreſſe the largeſt of their bounty, ſpeake but of *giving halfe of their Kingdomes*, (ſo *Herod*, and he did but talk ſo too) But *God* beſtowes whole *worlds*, and *Kingdomes*, as *Daniel* ſpeakes, *Dan.* 4. 35. and *gives them to whom he pleaſe.*

4. He that is *bountifull*, muſt give all he gives *freely*, and *willingly*. Which, though I put together, yet may imply two diſtinct things: As firſt, that he that gives, muſt be a *free agent* in it, who is at his choice, whether he would give any thing away or no. The *Sunne* doth much good to the world, it affords a large light, and even halfe the world at once is full of its glory: yea and all this light is its owne, not borrowed, as that of the Moone and Starres is; yet this *Sunne* cannot be called *good* or *bountifull*, becauſe it ſends forth this light *neceſſarily*, and *naturally*; and cannot chooſe but doe ſo; nor can it draw in its beames. But *God* is a free giver, he was at his choice, whether he would have made the world or no; and can yet when hee pleaſeth, *with-draw his Spirit and face, and then they all periſh*, *Pſal.* 104. 29. Pſal. 104. 29. Secondly, it muſt be *willingly* alſo: that is, no way conſtrained, nor by extraction wrung from him, who is to be called *Bountifull*. A *willing mind* in matter of bounty, is more *accepted* than the thing, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. Now of God it is ſaid,

Dan.

*Dan.*4.22. that he *gives* the Kingdomes of the world *to whom he will*, and none *swayes* him, or *can stay his hand*, *ver.*35. yea hee gives all away with *delight*. So *Pſal.* 104. 31. having ſpoken of feeding every living thing, and of other the like works of his goodneſſe, throughout that Pſalme, hee concludes with this, *God rejoyceth in all his workes:* that is, doth all the good he doth to his creatures with delight; It doth him good (as it were) to ſee the poore creatures feed.

Laſt of all, *looking for no recompence* for the time to come. This is another requiſite in *Bounty*. Sayes Chriſt, *Luke* 6. 34. *If you give to receive again, as ſinners doe*, this is not *thank-worthy*: but ver. 35. ſo doth not *your heavenly Father:* For (ſayes he) *Doe good, and hope for nothing againe, ſo ſhall you be like your Father*, and then you ſhall ſhew your ſelves true *children of the* [*moſt High.*] In which word, he inſinuates a reaſon why God gives all thus: becauſe he is ſo great, and ſo High a God, as nothing wee doe can reach him; as *David* ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 16. 2. *My goodneſſe extends not unto thee:* he is too high to receive any benefit by what we doe. And even that thankfulneſſe he exacts, he requires it but as an *acknowledgement of our duty, and for our good*, *Deut.*10.12.

Luke 6. 34.

Pſal. 16.2.

And ſo much for the firſt, namely, what *goodneſſe* and *bounty* is: and how *God* is truely *good*, and he *onely* ſo. But this attribute of his, and the effects of it, he exerciſeth towards all our fellow creatures, and did to *Adam* in Paradiſe. But now

now to *us ward* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) namely the ſons of *men*, now fallen, hee extendeth and manifeſts a further *riches*, namely, of *patience* and *long-ſuffering*, which the *devills* partake not of, the good Angels and other creatures that ſinned not, are uncapable of. For as Chriſt ſayes, Luke 6.35. *Luke* 6.35. In what he beſtowes on us, *he is kind* to ſuch, as are *evill and unthankfull*. *Mercy* is more than *goodneſſe*, for *mercy* alwaies doth reſpect *miſery*: and becauſe all the creatures are *ſubject* to a *miſery*, *Rom.*8.20,21,22. *of bondage and vanity*, therefore his *tender mercies are over all his workes*. But yet *patience* is a further thing than *mercy*, (as *mercy* is than *goodneſſe*) being exerciſed, not towards *miſerable* creatures onely, but towards *ſinners*, and includes in it more three things further towards them.

1. Not only that thoſe perſons he doth good unto do offend, and injure him; but that himſelf alſo is exceeding ſenſible of all thoſe wrongs, and moved by them, and alſo provoked to wrath thereby; it is not patience elſe. So in the 2. of *Pet.*3.9. It is not *ſlackneſſe* (ſayes he there:) *God is not ſlack*: that is, he ſits not in heaven as one of the Idol gods, that regarded not what acts were kept here below; or took not to heart mens carriages towards him; but is *long-ſuffering*, or *patient*; that is, he apprehends himſelfe wronged, is fully ſenſible of it; *is angry with the wicked every day*, *Pſal.*7.11. Pſal.7.11. he hath much adoe to forbear, even when he doth forbeare, and letteth them alone;

alone; he exerciſeth an attribute, a vertue towards them, namely, *patience*, in keeping in of his anger; which is as to *keepe fire* in ones boſome.

But ſecondly, this is not all; he doth not ſimply forbeare, and reſtraine his anger, but vouchſafeth that *time* he forbeares them in; that they might *repent* in it; and his *mercies*, as meanes *leading to repentance*. So it followes in that 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. *But God is long ſuffering to us-ward*, and his long ſuffering hath this in it, *not willing that any ſhould periſh, but come unto repentance*. So alſo *Revel.* 2. 21. it is called *ſpace to repent*. And all the bleſſings he vouchſafeth, he gives them as means and guides to *leade them on to repentance*, as here. And *Mat.* 18. 29. Have *patience* with me, and I will *pay* thee all. That is, give me a longer day and ſpace to pay the debt in, and be willing to accept it when I bring it, and let me lye out of priſon, that I may be enabled to pay it.

Revel. 2. 21.

Mat. 18. 29.

Thirdly, there is yet a further thing in his *patience*, namely, a *waiting*, and expectation that men would come in, and *repent*. So *Luke* 13. 17. *Theſe three yeeres have I* [*come ſeeking*] *fruit, but have found none*: There was an expectation, a longing, a deſire it would bring forth fruit, *Oh when ſhall it once be*, ſayes God, *Ier.* 13. laſt?

Luke 13. 17.

In the laſt place, that other attribute of *long ſuffering*, which is the third, is but as a further degree of *patience*; *but patience lengthened out farther*, that is, when *God* hath beene thus *patient*,

hath forborne and waited for their comming in, and that not for *three yeeres*, but haply *thirty*, *forty* yeeres, and ſtill they turne not; his patience then begins (as we would think) to be (as it were) worne out, and his anger begins to ariſe, as if he could forbeare no longer; (as it was towards that tree, *Why cumbereth it the ground? Cut it downe*) yet hee goes on to ſpare a man another yeere, and many more yeares ſtill after that; and *endureth with much long ſuffering* (as *Rom.* 9. 22.) *the veſſels of wrath*, endures to wonderment, above meaſure, beyond all expectation, all patience, as it were; this is *long ſuffering*.

The ſecond generall head is, that there are [*riches*] of this his *goodneſſe*, &c. expended on us.

It is a *rich* goodneſſe, patience and long ſuffering: *Rich* in *themſelves*, in regard of their *abundance*, as they came from him: and *rich* alſo in regard of their *precious uſefulneſſe unto us*, as they may be improved by us.

Firſt, *in themſelves* they are *rich*: if wee conſider what is expended, all that while, Hee layes out, not ſimply his *power* to ſuſtain and uphold all things, and to maintaine us freely: ſo to doe is nothing to him. For whilſt he doth but ſo, nothing goes out of purſe, or is detracted from him; (as I may ſo ſpeak) he feeles not the expence either of power, providence, &c. All this coſt him but words: For he *upholds all, creates all by the word of his power*, Hebr. 1. And thus to maintaine Heb. 1.

the

the Angels, and to have maintained all mankinde before they fell, had beene no more. But (my brethren) when now he maintains us sinners, not simply *power* goes forth from him, but his *glory* is expended, and taken from him, and for the while wasted, detracted from; he loseth, at present, every day infinitely by us, and he is sensible of it; every sinne takes glory from him, *robs* him, as he himselfe complaines: that he *who made the world, upholds it*, (keeps it together, as the hoops doe the barrell, it would fall to pieces else, to nothing; *in whom all live*, as fishes in the Sea, yea upon whom all live) that He should live *unknown*, unthought of, unserved; yea disgraced, dishonoured in the world, and have this world lost to him, as it were; and sinne, the Devill, wicked men, to have all the glory from him, to be exalted, to carry the whole world afore them: This spends upon him, he had need of Riches to doe this. Iohn 1.18

Secondly, consider the multitude of sinners, that thus spend, and live upon these riches, no lesse than all the world: Hee had need of multitudes of patience in him: He forbeares not one, but all and every one. We looke upon one man, and seeing him very wicked, wee wonder God cuts him not off; we wonder at our selves, that God did not cut us off before this, when once our eyes are opened: nay then cast your eyes over all the world, and stand amazed at Gods forbearance towards it. Take the richest man

that ever was, to have millions of men in his debt, it would undoe him ſoone. All the world are in Gods debt, and run ſtill in debt every day more and more, and yet he breaks not, nay breaks not them.

Nay thirdly, to manifeſt this abundance yet more, conſider not onely the multitude hee forbeares, but the time he hath done it: to forbeare much, and to forbeare it long: he hath forborne, and beene out of purſe from the beginning of the world, ſince men were upon the face of the earth, five thouſand yeeres and a halfe already; and how long it is yet to the day of Judgement, wee know not: And yet ye ſee, He is as *patient*, and as *bountifull* now in the latter dayes of the world, as he was at the firſt. Did that greateſt Convert that ever was, that had not lived paſt thirty yeers in his ſinfull eſtate (for he was young when he held the ſtoners clothes that ſtoned *Stephen*) and *yet was the chiefeſt of ſinners*, did he yet (as himſelfe ſayes) thinke himſelfe *a patterne of long ſuffering*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 16. thought it a great matter God ſhould forbeare ſo long? what is the whole world then? if he, being but one ſmall poore veſſell, was ſo richly laden with the riches of Gods patience, how is this great bark of the world then fraught, that hath gone over ſo vaſt a gulfe of time? how much of theſe his riches have been laden in it?

1 Tim. 1. 16.

And then fourthly, adde to this the expenſive prodigality of all theſe ſinners in all ages; every ſinner

sinner spends something, and how lavish are men of oathes? *All the thoughts of mens hearts from their youth up, they are evill, and onely evill, and continually*: and how much then hath every man spent him? every sin is a debt.

In the second place, this is a *rich* goodnesse and patience in regard of the *preciousnesse* and *usefulnesse*.

First, *precious*, in regard of what all these manifestations of his goodnesse and forbearance cost, even the blood of his Sonne, *who as a Lord hath bought and purchased all wicked men*; their lives, and their reprivall, all that time that here they live; and all the blessings and dispensations of goodnesse, which here they do enjoy. Christs mediation so far prevailes with God for all the world, that it puts a stop to the present proceedings of justice, which otherwise had said of all, *that day thou sinnest, thou dyest*. So that as Christ may be called the *wisdome* and the *power* of God; so also the *patience* and the *long suffering* of God. For, for his sake, and through his meanes, it is exercised: God would not shew a drop of mercy, but for his Sonne. Which, I take, strongly and clearly intimated, in that dealing of his, with the Jewes, (*Exod.* 23.20. compared with *Exod.* 33.2,3,4, &c. Immediately after God had given the Law, (by the rules and threatnings whereof, God the Father in his government was to proceed) and after they had transgressed it, He there declares, that he could not *goe with them*: 2 Pet. 3.1.

For (according to the rules of his government) *he ſhould deſtroy them; but his Angell, hee would ſend with them*, even Chriſt, he might ſhew them mercy, for he was the purchaſer of it: and that he was that Angell, appeares, in that God tells them, *ver.* 21. *that his name was in him*, who alſo would deſtroy them, if they turned not and repented, according to the rules of his Law, the Goſpell.

And *precious*, ſecondly, *to us*, in regard of the *uſefulneſſe*, this goodneſſe and long ſuffering tend and ſerve unto. This makes this ſtock of time afforded you, by Gods goodneſſe, to be riches indeed, that *it is ſpace to repent*; not a time of reprivall onely, but to get a pardon in; and this makes all the good things we enjoy to be precious indeed, that they are meanes, *leading us* by the hand to *repentance*. *Rich* it is, becauſe if your time be laid out as it ought, you may obtaine thoſe far ſurpaſſing *riches of glory* reſerved for hereafter; Win, and gaine Chriſt by it, and all his *unſearchable riches*. All things receive their worth and valuation from what they tend to, and from what depends upon them, and the uſe they might be put to. A *Bond*, a *mans will*, which in it ſelfe (as it is a piece of parchment) is not worth one ſhilling; yet an eſtate of many thouſands may lye and depend upon them. And ſo time, is not ſimply precious in it ſelf, but in regard of the opportunities of it. And accordingly, in thoſe ordinary paſſages of our lives, do we, more or leſſe, eſtimate

Rev. 2. 21.

eſtimate and count time precious, as the buſineſſe allotted to it, is of more or leſſe conſequence: when a matter falls out that concernes us, and requires diſpatch, and wee are caſt into ſtraits of time about it, wee count every minute precious: ſo this *time* of ours (which is the chiefe and principall of that ſtock, put into our hands by Gods patience) being *ſpace to repent in*, to gaine and trade for heaven with, in this reſpect every minute of it, is as much as heaven is worth, and one houre of it may be as much as all the time you are to ſpend for ever, after this life ended: every minute hath an influence into eternity. And how ever you may account it, yet the balance of the Sanctuary thus eſtimates your time, calls it *your money: why lay you out your money for what is not, &c?* (*i. e.*) this precious day of grace, and the thoughts, cares and endevors which are brought forth and minted in this time allotted) theſe are your money, you might purchaſe heaven by. And thus it hath beene eſteemed by holy and godly men, who yet had leſſe need to value it, having done the maine buſineſſe it was allotted for. *Davids* in the 39. *Pſal.* 13. being brought very low, *Oh ſpare me a little, that I may recover my ſtrength, before I goe hence, and be ſeen no more.* So *Hezekiah*, *Eſay* 38. how did he ſue for, and when hee had obtained fifteene yeeres, how did he bleſſe God? ver. 20. or if by this you judge not ſo, think with thy ſelf, what at the day of death thou wouldſt account of an houre, of a moneth, Eſay 55. 2.

moneth, a yeere? what others, who have laine gaſping, would have given a world for time againe, (as I have heard one crying day and night (*call time againe*) or if not then, oh what in Hell!

The third thing I am to ſhew, is, that all this *goodneſſe, patience*, and *forbearance*, is afforded towards you as a meanes, and helpes to bring you to repentance. *Acts* 17. 26, 27, 28. *God* (ſayes the Apoſtle there) *hath allotted* to men, both their *times* to live in, and alſo their places of abode and *habitations*, all richly furniſhed with bleſſings to uphold their lives & beings. And to what end are both theſe thus afforded? That they *might ſeek the Lord, if by groping after him* (even as men in the darke) *they might haply finde him.* But men being in the darke, and deſtitute of guides to bring thē unto God, may yet be as far of finding him as ever. Therefore adde but the words of my text, to what the Apoſtle ſayes there, and we ſee, that this goodneſſe of God takes us by the hand, and *leads us to repentance*; to turne from ſinne unto God, and ſo to finde him. And thus lead are you unto God, by the help of three ſeverall guides, which each after other ſweetly leade you, and point you out to this.

Acts 17. 26, 27, 28.

Firſt, all this goodneſſe beares witneſſe to your hearts of a gracious hand that extends it ſelf in all theſe; therefore in that 17. of the *Acts*, he ſubjoynes, *God is not far off any of us.* That there is a good God beſtowes all things on you,

is

is a thought lyes at next doore of all his bleſſings, not far off. Yea *they all* (ſayes the Apoſtle to the ſame Gentiles, *Acts* 14.16.) *doe beare witneſſe of him*, (though they *went on in their owne wayes*) *yet* (ſayes he there) *God left not himſelfe without witneſſe*; that is, an impreſſion on their hearts that his good hand beſtowed all on them, when *he filled their hearts with foode and gladneſſe*. Acts 14.16

Secondly, His goodneſſe having brought thus God to mens thoughts, then your owne conſciences take you, and leade you downe into your ſelves, and beare witneſſe, that you by walking in your owne wayes, doe nothing but provoke and offend this good God. So Rom.2.15.

And then thirdly, there is an indelible principle common to all men to *love thoſe who love them*; which after the two former have brought you hitherto, point you to *Repentance*, as the concluſion. [*Shall we goe on to ſinne againſt this good, ſo good? returne evill for good?*] Is not this a naturall neceſſary conſequent out of all theſe, to ſay as they, *Let us therefore feare the Lord, who giveth us the early and the latter raine*, as it is *Ier.* 5.26,27? And though men are ſaid not *to know this*, in the text, yet the meaning is, they doe not throughly and effectually conſider thus much, ſo as thereby to be brought to Repentance, yet however there is ſuch a witneſſe of all this in all mens hearts, and thus are they led on unto Repentance, would they ſee their way and follow their guide. Luke 6. Ier.5.26,27.

The use shall be an use of expostulation (as here the Apostle carryes it) with men sinfull and impenitent, for going on to sinne against all this mercy; together with an aggravation of their sinfulnesse hereby. Men, if young, doe usually take the advantage of this their precious time, (which out of so much long suffering is vouchsafed them) and of all those precious opportunities, and blessings they enjoy, to improve them onely, in reaping and gathering in to themselves the pleasures of sinne; making the time of youth their harvest of sinning, and yet thinke to escape by repenting, afterwards: and then when old, after they have already enjoyed a long and a faire Sunshine day to turne to God in, and to have sowne much seed to the Spirit, the comfort whereof they might now have reaped; yet as they have altogether neglected so to doe all their youth, so they goe on to doe so still, whilst they see they have any day left, be it never so neare the setting; and doe choose rather desperately to venture their estate in the world to come, upon the riches of his mercy pardoning, (though without all care and endeavour to change their hearts or lives) upon the experience they have had of the riches of his mercy forbearing them in this world, thinking to finde him the same in both. With all such, let me reason a little, and from the *riches of Gods goodnesse, patience, &c.* spent upon them, at once expostulate with them, for their impenitency, and aggravate to them

their

their sinfulnesse, and also, if possible, prevail with them to goe on to despise it thus no longer. And if there be any principle of common ingenuity, any sparke (I doe not say of grace, but of goodnesse of nature) left unextinguisht, me thinkes it should affect you, and doe some good on you ere I have done.

And to that end, consider a little, and compare together Gods loving kindnesses towards you, and your unkind dealings towards him.

To begin at the very beginning of thy being: how much riches of goodnesse were there laid and buried in thy foundation: when the first corner stone was laid, when thou wert made a man, (besides the cost which hath beene spent upon this building since) and, cursed as thou art, even that very foundation was laid in bloody *iniquities*, in which thou wert *conceived*; and the very materialls of soule and body, thou consistest of, being tempered with sinne, *like the stone in the wall, and beame out of the timber*, cry out every moment to God against thee, as *Edom* did, *Raze it, raze it, even to the very ground.* Hab. 2. 10, 11. Psal. 137. 7.

Consider how but the other day thou wert meere nothing, and when an infinite number that never were nor shall be, were in as great a possibility of being as thou, (for when he made this world, he could have laid it aside wholly, and created millions of other worlds) yet he chose thee to have a roome in this, but one world, (for he means to make no more) and this world could

have stood without thee, and did before thou wert, and shall doe when thou art gone: yet he called thee forth out of nothing, and by his Almighty power, bade thee stand forth when there was no need of thee. I say he chose thee to have a being: for as there is an election of things that are to salvation, so out of things that were not unto being. And wretch that thou art, if thou repentest not, thou destroyest what God hath made, and hadst better have kept nothing still; and never have peept out, or else to skulk into thy first nothing againe, for thou art *lost, better never to have beene borne.*

Secondly, Consider yet more *goodnesse.* Thou mightest have beene admitted into the lowest forme of creatures, have beene a worme, a flea, a flye, which we men fillip and crush to death at pleasure: but to be made a *Man*, created one of the States, Barons, Lords of the world the first houre, admitted into the highest order, crowned a King in the wombe, as *David* sayes of man, *Psal.* 8. 5. *made a little lower than the Angels*, but *crowned* with glory and honour; *made to have dominion over all the works of his hands.* The one halfe of thee is more worth than a whole world, [thy soule] as Christ sayes, that went to the price of soules; upon which God hath bestowed an eternity of being, and made it the picture of his face, his Image, when other creatures do weare but his footsteps. And thy body the other peece, and indeed but the *Case*, the *Sheath*, (as *Daniel*,

phrase,

phraſe and the Chaldee hath it, *Dan. 7. 15.*) *of thee*, what a curious workmanſhip is it? *wonderfully and fearfully made*, as *David* ſayes, *Pſalm.* Pſal. 139. 15.
139. 15. *curiouſly wrought in the lower parts of the earth*: So there he calls the womb; becauſe as curious workmen, when they have ſome choice piece in hand, perfect it in private, and then bring it forth to light for men to gaze at: So God out of a teare, a drop, he hath limmed out the Epitome of the whole world; the Index of all the creatures. *Sunne, moone, ſtarres, are to be* Eccl. 12. 2.
found in thee. And yet wretch as thou art, thou art withall the Epitome of hell, and broughteſt into the world with thee, the ſeeds and principles of all the villanies, that have beene acted in the world, and if thou repenteſt not, thou hadſt better have beene a toad, or ſerpent, the hatefulleſt of creatures; and wouldſt change thy condition with them one day.

Thirdly, being a man, haſt thou all thy members that belong unto a man? it is becauſe *hee wrote them all in his booke*, *Pſal.* 139. 16. if he had left out an eye in his common-place booke, thou hadſt wanted it; is not that a mercy? aske the blinde. If thou hadſt wanted thoſe windows to looke out at, thy body would have beene a dungeon, the world a priſon. If a Tongue (*which is thy glory*) or an eare, thou hadſt lived among men, as a beaſt among men. And yet when God gave thee all theſe, what did he but put weapons into an enemies hand? for haſt thou not uſed all

Rom. 6. these, *as weapons of unrighteousnesse?* Insomuch as *the tongue*, but *one member*, is called *a world of iniquity* by the Apostle; and if thou repentest not, thou hadst better (as Christ sayes) have entred into the world without an eye, an eare, a tongue, than with these goe for ever into hell.

Fourthly, when thou wert taken out of the wombe, (where thou didst remaine, but whilest thou wert a framing) what a stately palace hath he brought thee into, [the world] which thou findest prepared, and ready furnisht with all things for thy maintenance, as *Canaan* was to the Children of Israel; a stately house thou buildedst not, trees thou plantedst not, a rich Canopy spangled, spread as a Curtaine over thy head; he sets up a Taper for thee to work by [the Sun]

Psal. 104 23. *till thou art weary, Psal.* 104. 23. and then it goes down without thy bidding, for *it knows its going downe, ver.* 19. and then he drawes a curtain over halfe the world, that men may goe to rest, *thou makest darknesse, and it is night, ver.* 20. An house this world is, so curiously contrived, that to every roome of it, even to every poore village, springs doe conceal pipes to finde thee water. So

Psal. 104. 10, 11 *Psal.* 104. 10, 11. The pavement of which house thou treadest on, brings forth thy food, *ver.* 14. *Bread for strength, wine to cheere thy heart, oyle to make thy face to shine, ver.* 15. Which three are there synecdochically put for all things needfull to strength, ornament, and delight. The very

chambers

chambers of that house (as *David* calls them) *drop fatnesse*, and water the earth, *ver. 13.* Hee wheeles the heavens about, and so spins out time for thee, every moment of which time brings forth some blessing or other, and no one is barren. Therefore *Psal. 65. 11.* *the yeere is said to be crowned with goodnesse*: a diadem of goodnesse encircles it round: and yet thou hast filled this world thou thus art brought into, with nothing but rebellions, as hee hath done with blessings, and hast piled up sins to heaven; and thou hast pressed all these armies of blessings thou findest the world filled with, to fight against their Maker, under the devills banner, whom thy wickednesse sets up as the *god of this world*. And as the yeere is crowned with goodnesse, so thy yeeres with wickednesse, and no moment is barren, *but all thy imaginations are evill continually*. Yea thou hast sinned *against heaven and earth*, and *subjected the whole creation unto vanity*, laden the earth, and filled it so with wickednesse, that *it groanes*, the axeltree of it is even ready to crack under thee, and the *ground* thou treadest on to *spue thee out*. Psal. 65. 11.

Fiftly, since thou camest into the world, what a long time hath God suffered thee to live in it? hee hath not spared thee *three yeares* onely, (as he did the figtree) but *thirty, forty*. And when thou first madest bold to thrust forth thy trayterous head into the world, Death (which thy sin brought into the world with it) might have arrested

rested thee, and told thee, this world was no place
Acts 1. 25. for thee, for hell is onely *our owne place*, Acts 1. 25. thou shouldest have beene executed the first day. And is not so much time of ease from punishment infinite mercy? Cast but your thoughts upon the Angels that fell, that have been in hell from the first moment of their sinning, doe but thinke with your selves, what they would give to have so much time, cut out of that eternity, they are to run through, & to have it set apart for ease, and to be void of torment; if the rich man in hell, made it such a great suit, and counted it so great a favour to have but one drop of water (which could but for a little while (scarce more than a moment) have cooled and eased, not his whole body, but the tip of his tongue only) how much more would he have thought it mercy, to have lived so many yeares againe as he had done free from torment? what is it then for thee, to live so many yeares free from the falling of the least drop of that wrath, whereof the full vialls should have been poured out many yeares agoe? The same Law was out against us, which was out
2 Pet. 3. 9. against the Angels; *That day thou eatest, thou shalt dye the death*: what put the difference? the Apostle tells us, his *long suffering to us ward*: not to them: for in *Chap.* 2. 4. he had told us that hee *spared* not the *Angels which fell*, but posted, and threw them into hell, as soone as they had sinned.

Sixtly, But further, in the 6. place; Is this all? hath

hath it beene barely a time of eaſe given thee, a time of reprivall? No, it hath beene more, *ſpace to repent*, and ſo to obtaine thy pardon in, *Rev.* 2.21. And as it hath beene more than eaſe of torment unto thee, ſo alſo conſider it hath beene more than ſlackneſſe in him that hath afforded it to thee, as the Apoſtle there doth tell us. It is not that he hath tooke no notice of thy offending him, but he is ſenſible of every idle thought, of every oath, vaine word, and as the Scripture tels us, *he is pained at the very heart*, in ſo much as *he repents* that ever he made thee; he *is angry with thee every day* thou riſeſt, every time hee lookes on thee, when ever he meets thee going into the Taverne to be drunk, the whorehouſe to be uncleane, when he meets thee reeling in the ſtreets, he hath much adoe to forbeare killing thee, as he had to forbeare *Moſes* when he met him in the Inne: He is ready to have a blow at thee, and it ſhould not need be any great ſtroake, or fetching his arme about; if he did but blow on thee, thou wert conſumed. To ſuffer thee to live, doth therefore coſt him much riches of patience; but to cut thee off, need coſt him nothing: hee can doe that with eaſe. But further, all is joyned with a *willingneſſe* that thou ſhouldſt *repent*, and *not periſh*, as that place tells thee. It were much mercy for a Traytor to be reprived, to have a leaſe of his life for twenty yeeres, though there were no hope nor meanes of obtaining his finall pardon after that time ſpent, and this alſo, though Gen. 6.

but for one treason, and though all that time of his reprivall he carryes and behaves himselfe never so obediently. But unto thee, this time hath beene more than a longer day of life, and putting off the execution (which for the guilt of that first rebellion should have been acted on thee in the womb) it hath beene *time to repent in*? And yet hath not this time of thy reprivall made thee so much the more rebellious? and hast not thou spent all this time in making up the measure of thine iniquity full? and hath it beene willingnesse onely in God that thou shouldest not perish? yea more, joyned with waiting also, when it should once be, thinking the time long, as longing and desiring that thou wouldst repent, that he might pardon thee. Thus *Ierem.* 13. last, God expresseth himselfe, *when shall it once be?* yea and consider how many dayes of payment have been set, and how many promises made, and broken all by thee, and yet still hee waiteth unto wonderment. Thou receivedst presse money at thy Baptisme, when thou didst promise to forsake the devill and all his workes, and to begin to serve him, which thou shouldst begin to discerne betweene good and evill. But no sooner did the light of knowledge dawne in thy heart, but thou beganst to fight against him; and thy first thoughts to this day have beene onely and continually evill. And then (haply) in thy younger yeares, before thou hadst tasted of the pleasures of sinne, he gave thee an inkling, by meanes of

thy

thy education, of his goodneſſe towards thee, and of that happineſſe to be had in him, and thou hadſt the firſt offer of him, ere thy tender yeares were poyſoned by the world; and he hath dealt with thee againe and againe, both by his Word and Spirit; not *waited* onely, but *wooed* thee, and hath beene a ſuiter to thy heart long: and I appeale to your hearts, how many promiſes you have made him, of turning from all your rebellions to him, after ſuch a Sermon, which was brought powerfully home: in ſuch a ſickneſſe, and in ſuch a ſtrait, thy conſcience knowes full well: And ſtill God hath made tryall of thee, and given thee longer day; and though thou haſt broke with him againe and againe, yet he hath forborne thee againe and againe, and hath waited this twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, ſixty years, when thou ſhouldeſt come in, and be as good as thy word, and ſtill thou haſt failed him. And yet behold and wonder, and ſtand confounded at the riches of his long ſuffering, that after ſo many yeares expence, and promiſes broken by thee, expectations failed in him, and many mockeries of him, after all this he is yet willing to accept of the remainder, if thou wouldſt *ſpend the reſt of the time, left thee in the fleſh, according to his will*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Pet.* 4. 3. even to loſe principall, uſe, and all, for what is paſt, and requires but the ſame compoſition was propounded the firſt day; yea and not onely ſo, but with promiſe to become a debtor unto thee, to beſtow 1 Pet. 4. 3.

further riches on thee than ever yet thou ſaweſt, or art able to conceive: yea and all this, when he could have his penyworths out of thee another way, and loſe not one farthing by thee, but by puniſhing thee in hell, recover all *to the utmoſt*.

Neither, ſeventhly, hath it beene barely and ſimply an act of *patience* and *forbearance*, though joyned with this willingneſſe, thou ſhouldſt not periſh; or meerely a permiſſive act of ſuffering thee to live. But God ſhewes forth yet more riches of goodneſſe joyned with this long ſuffering; *in him ye live, and move, and have your being*; and doſt thou live in him onely? nay thou liveſt on him alſo, upon his coſt and charges; *I have hung upon thee* (ſayes *David*) *from my mothers wombe*. And conſider what thy life is, that of ſo ſmall a bottome, he ſhould ſpin out ſo long a thred: had hee not drawne it out of his owne power, as the ſpider doth her web out of her owne bowels, it had beene at an end the ſecond minute; to maintaine that *radicall moiſture*, that *oyle* that feeds the lampe, and light of thy life, that *radicale balſamum*, this is as great a miracle as the maintaining the *oyle in the cruze* of the poore famiſhed widow. And further yet, hath he maintained thee onely? Nay more, hath he not defended thee, tooke thy part, protected thee, tooke thee under his wing, as the hen doth her chickens, to ſhelter thee from thoſe many dangers thy life hath been expoſed unto? Otherwiſe,

wiſe, how many wayes, ere this, hadſt thou been ſnatcht away out of the land of the living? Is thy caſe, the caſe of the *figtree* onely, which before we mentioned, that when God cryed, *Cut it downe*, another cryed, *ſpare it?* but there have beene many have cryed, *Cut thee downe*, and God hath cryed, *ſpare Thee:* there is never a minute, but the devills would have had a blow at thy life, as he longed to have had at *Iobs*. That thou, a poore lump of fleſh, ſhouldſt walke through, and in the midſt of ſuch an hoſt of fierce and cruell enemies, whoſe hearts are ſwelled with malice at thee, and God ſhould ſay to them all, concerning thee, as he did to *Laban* concerning *Iacob*, *Touch not this man*. And yet if thou wert not liable to their malice and power, yet conſider how many dangers and caſualties, beſides, thou haſt beene kept in, and from; as falls, drowning, killing many wayes; how often have the arrows of death come whisking by thee, took away thoſe next thee, (haply of thy kindred, brother, ſiſter, yoke-fellow, of the ſame houſe, family with thy ſelfe) and yet have miſſed thee? And if we look no farther than theſe dayes of mortality we have lived in; two great plagues in this Kingdome, how have the moſt of us all here ſurvived, and now the third is increaſing and growing upon us? To have our lives in ſuch *deare yeares* of time, when to *have our life for a prey* is mercy enough, as *Ieremy* told *Baruch*! that theſe arrows ſhould flye round about us, over our heads, and miſſe us!

that Gods arreſts ſhould ſeize upon men, walking, talking with us, and ſpare us! how often, many other wayes, hath thy neck been upon the block, and the axe held over, and yet hath fallen beſides! To goe no farther than thy own body, the humours thereof, if God ſhould not reſtraine them, would overflow and drowne it, as the waters would the earth, if God ſhould not ſay to them, *ſtay your proud waves*. And when in a ſickneſſe they have been let out, yet God hath kept a ſluce, that ſo much ſhould break forth, and no more, which ſhould purge, and waſh the body, and make it more healthfull, as the overflowing of *Nilus* doth. And when then thy body hath been brought low and weake, and like a crazy rotten ſhip in a ſtorme, taking in water on all ſides, ſo that all the Phyſitians in the world could not have ſtopt thoſe Leakes; yet hee hath rebuked wind and ſea, hath careened, mended thee, and launched thee into the world againe, as whole, as ſound, and ſtrong as ever; and God hath ſaid, as *Iob* 33. that *Thou ſhouldſt not dye*. Iob 33. In a word, if thou conſider but what thy life is, and the dangers it is ſubject to, thou wilt acknowledge it as great a wonder to preſerve it, as to ſee a glaſſe, that hath beene in continuall uſe, gone through many hands, and hath had many knocks, and falls, to be kept for forty, fifty, ſixty yeeres whole and unbroken: God hath carryed *thy life in his hand*, as it were a candle in a paper lanthorn in a ſtrong windy night, and kept it from being extinct,

extinct, when as wee often ſee in many, that a little cold comes but in at a little cranny, and *blowes their candle out*, as *Iob* ſpeaks.

And eighthly, how have theſe yeeres and hours of thy time been filled up with goodneſſe? and with how many comforts? For a Traytor to live, though but upon bread and water all his dayes, what favour is it? and ſo hadſt thou lived all this time, never ſo miſerably, though *all thy dayes thou hadſt eaten thy bread in darkneſſe, and hadſt had much ſorrow with thy ſickneſſe,* (as *Solomon* ſpeaks.) Some there are, who, as *Iob* ſpeaks, *Iob* 21.15. *dye in the bitterneſſe of their ſoules, and never eate with pleaſure,* ſcarce ſeeing a good day; and if this had beene thy caſe, yet this is infinite mercy. Even whatſoever is on this ſide Hell, is mercy. *Lam.* 3.22. ſay they in the worſt eſtate the Church was ever on earth, *It is thy* [*mercies,*] not *mercy* onely, but multitude of mercies are ſhewne us, *that we are not conſumed, becauſe his mercies are renewed every morning.* If at the brink of hell, and not in, it is mercy. But hath he not all this while *filled thy heart with food and gladneſſe,* as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Acts* 14.17? It were infinite to goe over the particular kinds of common comforts, which God vouchſafes men here: not halfe the riches of his goodneſſe is yet told: It would require an age to make an Inventory of them. Haſt a houſe in the world to hide thy head in, and keepe thee from the injuries of the weather? (which was more than Chriſt

Eccleſ.5.17.

Iob 21.25.

Lamen.3.22.

Acts 14.17.

Christ had) God he is thy *Landlord*, (though it may be thou payest him no rent;) *he* it is that *builds the house*, *Psal.* 127. 1. Hast a bed to lye upon? he *makes* it, especially *in thy sickness*, Psal. 41. 3. *Psal.* 41. 3. Hast thou *sleepe* (which is the nurse of nature, the parenthesis of all thy cares and griefes,) he rocks thee asleep every night; and as he gives thee a house, so hee gives thee *rest*, Psal. 127. 2. *Psal.* 127. 2. It is God keeps off those gnatts of distracting cares, and griefes, and thoughts, and terrors of conscience, would buzze about a man, and keepe one continually waking. And when thou sleepest, *is thy sleepe pleasant* to thee? *God* Ier. 31. 26. *makes it* so, *Ier.* 31. 26. Hast thou cloathes to cover thy nakednesse? reade old *Iacobs* Indentures, Gen. 28. 20. *Gen.* 28. 20. and thou shalt see by them whose finding they are at; if *Thou wilt give me rayment*, that is one of his conditions mentioned. Yea, doe thy cloathes *keepe thee warme?* even this is attri- Iob 37. 17. buted to him, *Iob* 37. 17. He fills thee, feeds thee, *spreads thy table*, serves thee, *fills thy cup*, as *David* describes his goodnesse, *Psal.* 23. 5. and gives thee thy *meat in due season*; and hath not failed thee a meales meat, but thou hast had it at thy *appointed time*, as *Iob* speaks. And hast thou health? which is the salt to all these blessings, (without which thou wouldst say, *thou hadst no pleasure in them*) He is the *God of thy health*, and keeps off Exod. 15. 26. diseases. *Exod.* 15. 26. *I will put none of those diseases on thee; I am the Lord who healeth thee*; that is, preserve thee from them which else would

would ſeize on thee. And theſe mercies hee vouchſafeth unto you that are the pooreſt, and *loades you with theſe* and the like *beneſits every day.* Pſal. 68. 19.

But haſt thou *Riches* added to theſe, and abundance? *The bleſsing of God maketh rich, Prov.* 10. 22. Though thou hadſt them by birth, yet hee made thoſe friends, and parents of thine, but feoffees in truſt for thee: they were no more, it was God who bequeathed them, *Eccl.* 2. laſt. Or whether thou haſt got them ſince by thine owne induſtry, it is hee *gives thee power to get wealth, Deut.* 8.18. *Prov.* 12. 24. and out of *a ſmall eſtate maketh men great, Iob* 8. 7. It is hee by his providence hath ſtopt the ſecret iſſues and draynes of expence, at which other mens eſtates runne out; hath ſtopt *that hole in the bottome of the bag*, as the Prophet ſpeaks. And with theſe riches hath he given *thee a heart to uſe them.* This, as it is a *farther mercy, Eccleſ.* 5. 19. and Chap. 6. 2. ſo alſo from him, as it is noted there. Deut. 8. 18.

Or haſt thou *credit* (which is better than riches? ſo ſayes *Solomon, Prov.* 22. 1.) it is God who gives it, not thy wiſedome, parts, or worth: *Eccleſ.* 9. 11. *favour is not alwaies to men of skill:* that is, not acceptation of what they doe, without a farther bleſſing from God. Therefore beſides the *gift* of *wiſdome*, he gave a further promiſe of *honour* alſo unto *Solomon*, 2 *Chron.* 1. 11. It is God who faſhions mens opinions. The Apoſtle prayes to God *his ſervice* might *be accepted of* Prov. 22. 1.

the Saints, though no ſervice was like to be more acceptable, for it was the gathering and bringing in of almes and reliefe to them. It is he rules mens tongues, bids men bleſſe, as well as *he bade Shimei curſe*: and he hath kept thee from ſuch groſſe ſinnes, which, as flyes, would have *putrifyed the oyntment of thy good name*, who alſo conceales thoſe thou haſt committed, and *hides thee from the ſtrife of tongues*, *Iob* 5.21.

Iob 5.21.

Haſt thou friends, or doe any love thee? (wherein much of the comfort of our lives conſiſts, and therefore *David* ſayes of *Ionathan*, 2 *Sam.*1.26. *Thou wert pleaſant to me*) it is God who gives favour in mens eyes: So hee did *Ioſeph*, *Gen.* 39.21. If any man or creature doth thee a kindneſſe, he toucheth their hearts, (as it is ſaid of the men who clave to *Saul*) and viſits for thee; He made the *Ægyptians* beyond all reaſon the *Iſraelites friends*, gave them favour in their eyes, as the text tells us. And hence, *Gen.* 33.10. *Iacob* ſayes, *He ſaw the face of God*, in reconciled *Eſaus* face; for Gods favour appeared in his looke. He put you into your callings, ranks, and ſtations, gives you all your skill, ſucceſſe in them; The meaneſt of trades, to *ſow*, and *plough*, and *threſh*, they are *from the Lord*, *who is wonderfull in working*, (*Eſay* 28. from the 23. to the end) even as well as the skill of the moſt curious Ingraver, Limbner, or Embroyderer (as of *Bezaleel*) the Scripture ſayes, God was his Maſter, taught him. Haſt thou enlarged parts and gifts

2 Sam.1.26.

Gen.33.10.

for

for higher imployments? it is not thy *birth*, or *age* hath acquired them unto thee: *Iob* 32. 8, 9. *Great men are not alwaies wise*, therefore it goes not by birth; *nor have the aged alwaies understanding*, it goes not onely by experience; but *it is the inspiration of the Almighty*. And hast a calling answerable to thy parts, to be a Scholler, and have thy minde enriched and ennobled with the best and choisest jewell the world hath, wisdome and knowledge; whereby the minde is elevated as much above other mens, as they are above beasts? God hath beene thy great *Tutor*, *The mind of man is Gods Candle*, and hee maketh wiser than a mans teachers, as he did *Moses* in Egyptian learning, *Daniel*, *David*. Iob 32.8, 9.

To conclude, hast thou comfort in all these? in riches, learning, credit, wife, children, meat, drink, &c. Hee puts in all the sugar, delight and pleasure that especially depends on him; even to fashion the heart to all these. As ayre lights not without the Sunne, nor wood heats not without fire; so neither doth thy condition comfort thee without God. And therefore *Acts* 14.17. it is said, *He filled their hearts, as with food*, so, *with gladnesse*. Acts 14.17.

And besides all these, consider the many peculiar passages and turnings of his providence towards thee for thy good; the working of things together, ever and anon to doe thee a good turne; the packing and plotting all for thee, better than thou couldst have plotted for

thy ſelfe; as thy reliefe in many ſtreights, ſucceſſe in many buſineſſes; He *workes all our works in us and for us*, as *Eſay* ſpeaks, *Eſay* 26. hath he not taken ſuch ſpeciall care and providence of thee, as if hee had regarded no man elſe in the world?

And now when thou haſt conſidered all, bethinke thy ſelfe withall a little of thy dealings towards him: what have beene the effects and fruits of all this goodneſſe? hold up thy head man, looke God in the face. It is well yet, that ſhame begins to cover thee. How hath that his patience and long ſuffering, vouchſafing thee ſpace to repent, wrought with thee? how nigh to repentance hath it brought thee? Such is the perverſeneſſe of mans nature, as *Solomon* tells us, Eccleſ. 8. 11. *Eccleſ.* 8. 11. that *becauſe ſentence againſt an evill worke is not preſently executed, therefore the hearts of the ſonnes of men are fully ſet to doe evill*: Becauſe God defers puniſhing, they defer repenting; thou thinkeſt to ſpend the moſt precious of thy time and ſtrength in ſinning, and give God the dreggs, the bottome, the laſt ſands, thy dotage, which thy very ſelfe and friends are weary of, and all theſe bleſſings and comforts which God hath vouchſafed thee, how haſt thou uſed them againſt him? This oyle which ſhould have beene fuell to thy thankfulneſſe, hath encreaſed the fire of thy luſts, and thy *luſts have conſumed them all*, *Iames* 4. The riches hee hath given, thou haſt made Idols of, and ſacrificed thy

thy deareſt, morning, daily thoughts and affecti-
ons unto, as God complaines, *Ezek.*16. from the
15. and ſo on: [His meat] (as at the 29. ver. he
calls it) thou ſacrificedſt to *thy belly, which thou
haſt made* thy God; thy ſtrength to women;
the wealth hee hath given you, you have made
uſe of, but to live at a high rate of ſinning, and to
procure the ſweeteſt bits, the daintieſt and moſt
coſtly ſinnes; The edge of that ſword of power
God hath put into thy hand, thou haſt turned a-
gainſt him and his, haply both his Children and
Miniſters; ſo that God, by giving thee all theſe,
hath but made thee more able to offend him, and
hath ſtrengthned an enemy, and by ſparing thee
thus long, hath but made thee more bold to doe
it; all his mercyes have but fortifyed thy heart
againſt him; *Doe ye requite the Lord thus, ye fo-
liſh people and unkind?* as *Moſes* expoſtulates the
caſe, *Deut.*32.6. as Chriſt ſaid to the Jewes, *For* Deut.32.6.
which of all my good workes doe yee ſtone me? So
ſay I to you, for which of all his mercies is it, ye
ſinne againſt him? what, to fight againſt him
with his owne weapons? to betray all he gives
you into the devills, his enemies hands? *What
iniquity did you ever finde in him*, thus to deale?
God will one day thus expoſtulate his cauſe with
you, and *heape coales of fire upon all your heads*,
(if that you turne not) becauſe you have *rendred
him evill for good*: and all theſe mercies thus
abuſed, will be as ſo many coales to make hell
fire the hotter. And to reaſon this point yet fur-

ther with you out of the Text, and what arguments it will afford to work upon you.

Conſider, firſt, what it is thou doeſt; whileſt thus thou goeſt on, thou art a *Deſpiſer of the Riches of his goodneſſe*: that which is oppoſite to goodneſſe, muſt needs be tranſcendently evill. What, *art thou evill, becauſe God is good?* and ſo much the more evill, by how much the more he is good, ſurely there muſt needs be an unexhauſted treaſure of wickedneſſe in thee, which will alſo cauſe in the end a treaſure of wrath in him; what and ſinne againſt mercy, patience, long ſuffering, added to goodneſſe? of all attributes, as the richeſt to the moſt glorious; for it is that he glories in: in the abuſing of which, therefore he thinkes himſelfe moſt debaſed: of all attributes the tendereſt: what, kick againſt *his bowels?* ſo are his mercies called: canſt hit him no where elſe but there? to deſpiſe a mans wiſdome, power, learning, is not ſo much as to deſpiſe his love; what canſt thou imagine will become of thee, when thou commeſt to dye? what is it thou wilt then come to plead and cry for? O mercy, mercy; why wretch that thou art, it is mercy thou haſt ſinned againſt. Riches of mercy and patience abuſed, turnes into fury. I may allude to that ſpeech, 1 *Sam.* 2.25. *If a man ſinne againſt his brother, the Iudge ſhall judge him; but if againſt God, who ſhall plead for him?* So hadſt thou ſinned againſt any other attribute, Mercy might have pleaded

1 Sam. 2.25.

ded for thee; but if againſt Mercy it ſelfe, who ſhall?

Well, if thou goeſt on thus to doe ſo ſtill, thou haſt a *hard heart*; it argues the greateſt hardneſſe of all other; that is the ſecond. You uſe not (however it comes to paſſe) to deale thus with the worſt of men, ſinners like to your ſelves; but to them that love you, you tender love againe, *Luke* 6. 33. and will you deale ſo with God? *Is it a ſmall thing to weary men, but you muſt weary God alſo?* ſayes *Eſay*, 7. 13. Hee thought it infinitely leſſe to abuſe men than God; but you carry your ſelves as men, to men, but as devills towards God; herein ye have not the hearts of men in you; not principles of common humanity, whereby ye differ from beaſts; The *cords of love are called the cords of a man*, *Hoſ.* 11. 6. the ſpirit of man breakes, melts under kindneſſe; beaſts indeed yee uſe to prick with goades, but the cords of a man are the cords of love; no principle being more deepely engraven in mens hearts, than this, *to doe good to thoſe who doe good to you*, *Mat.* 5. 46. Nay, would ye had herein yet the hearts of beaſts; *The Oxe knowes his owner, the Aſſe his maſters cribb, but my people have rebelled againſt mee*. A ſinne ſo much againſt nature, that he calls upon thoſe creatures, who have no more than meere nature in them, viz. *the heavens to ſtand aſtoniſht at it*. But as nature elevated by grace, riſeth higher than it ſelf; ſo being poyſoned with ſinne, it is caſt below it ſelfe;

Eſay 7. 13.

Hoſ. 11. 6.

Mat. 5. 46.

Eſay 1.

selfe, sins against it self, and the principles which are begotten in and with it selfe; if it were not so, how were it possible thou shouldst *hate him*, who never did thee hurt? and goe on to wound him, who weepeth over thee? and despise that in him most, which seekes to save thee? and load him with sins? *Amos* 2.13. who loades thee dally with his mercies, *Psal.*68.19.

Amos 2.13.
Psal.68.19.

There is a third consideration the text suggests, to shew the fearfulnesse of thy sin in this respect; and that is, that thou goest on every minute sinning and in impenitency, by despising his goodnesse, to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath; to sin against mercy, of all other encreaseth wrath; thou must pay treasures, for treasures spent. As thou lavishly spendest riches of mercy, so God will recover riches of glory out of thee: God will not lose by thee, but will reckon with thee in wrath for *every offer* of patience spent; for every sand of long suffering that runs out, hee drops in a drop of wrath into his Vialls, and it will prove a treasure, such a treasure as shall bring in an eternall revenue of glory unto God, of all his glory lost, and riches spent, with advantage; such a treasure, as will aske an eternity of time to be spent upon thee, and yet be never emptied or made lesse; and the longer thou goest on, the greater heap it will swell unto. And dost thou know and consider how fast this treasure fills, and how much the longer thou goest on to adde to it, still the more thou addest, still the last

laſt yeere more than all the yeeres before: every minutes impenitency adding to this heape and ſumme, as new figures added in a ſumme uſe to doe; the firſt is but one, the ſecond makes it ten, the third an hundred, the fourth a thouſand, and what a ſumme will this grow to?

Ay but thou wilt ſay, Tuſh, I am in proſperity, in health, wealth, and eaſe, and to day ſhall be as to morrow, and much more abundant, *Eſay* 56. 12. Well, but fourthly, conſider out of the text, that there will come a day at laſt, the morrow whereof will be a *day of wrath*: It is treaſuring up now, but is not brought forth till the day of wrath, till which day thou mayeſt goe on and proſper, as *Iob* giving us the reaſon why wicked men proſper here, ſayes, Chap. 21. They are *reſerved to the day of wraths*, in the plurall, becauſe treaſures are laid up againſt then; thou art yet ſpared, becauſe thy ſins are not yet full, and that Treaſure is not full, as the ſins of the *Amorites* were not; and all this thy preſent proſperity fits thee but for hell. So *Rom.* 9. 22. they are ſaid to be veſſells *fitted for deſtruction*, by long ſuffering. And ſo *Nahum* tells us, they are but as *ſtubble* laid out in the Sunne a drying, till it be *fully dry*, *Nahum* 1.10. that it may burne the better; and like grapes that are let to hang in the Sunſhine till they be ripe, *Revel.* 15. 16. and ſo thou for the *winepreſſe of Gods wrath*.

But thy ſenſeleſſe heart may hap to ſay, I ſee no ſuch thing, and theſe are but threats, I thinke

so; therefore it is said in the Text, that it is a *Treasure*; which, as Treasures use to be, is hid till that day comes, & then *revealed*, as the words have it. For though thou seest not this day a comming, yet God who sits in heaven, sees thy day a comming, as *David* sayes, *Psal.* 37. 13. who is therefore said to see it, because himselfe sees it not; and it is a comming faster than thou art
2 Pet. 2. 3. aware of it, 2 *Pet.* 2. 3. *Damnation slumbereth not*, though thou dreamest not of it; *lingreth not*: as an hue and cry, it is sent out, and is on its course, and will in the end overtake thee, and that when thou least thinkest of it, *as a theefe in the night*, when thou art asleepe, yet dreamest not of it,
2 Thes. 5. 2 *Thes.* 5. when thou art least prepared for it, as in the old world, when they were eating and drinking: as God watcheth when his child is at the best and ripest, and then takes him; so he will watch thee to take thee for thy neglect, at thy worst, and give thee haply no time to prepare; they got downe to hell in a moment, *Psal.* 73 9.

FINIS.

IMPRIMATUR;

THO: WEEKES.

R.P. Epe: Lond.

Cap. Domeſt.